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THE VOICE OF THE LORD

Over the Full Barns of the West

EDWIN DAVIES SCHOONMAKER

I HEARD a Voice, what time the sun went down
And twilight purpled o'er the prairie States,
"They were not born for freemen but for slaves,"
And all my heart ran cold.

"Another day,
Another day, O Lord, they do but sleep;
Their hands are heavy from the garnering.
Remember, Lord, the fatness of the land.
To-morrow they will wake and, waking, strike.
These are the men who, when the island moaned
Under the spoiler, threw their lariats down
And loosed a thousand horses toward the South
And smote the oppressor from the famous Hill.
Bid once again the captive waterfalls
Cry warning to the Rocky Mountain States,
And let the arid plains wring hands and moan.
It cannot be but the hot blood will leap,
Seeing the proud West in the place of shame."

"Woe to the generations yet unborn!
Rain hath not fallen and it shall not fall
Forever, saith the Lord. Lo, where I loosed
The mountain rivers, pouring waters down
To give the waste lands drink, that ye might laugh,
Hearing the dry thing murmur, '*He hath come!*'

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For in My dreaming of the things to be
I saw the hot sands cool, and the green wave
Of grain and orchard follow wondrously
The living silver thro' the wilderness
That there young towns might spring and shine as stars.
Lo, where the leaping rivers lie in chains!
A living Death hath seized the streams of God.
And in those streams I mingled, saith the Lord,
Power and Light for all the homes of men.
Woe to the generations yet unborn!
The wheel shall hang until ye pay the toll.
The stars shall light you thro' your bonded streets.
The cactus and the wild grass shall live on.
I will let loose the drought upon the land,
Seeing ye give My rivers unto men.
Where differ ye from them that I have slain?"

"Mistake not seeming sloth for baseness, Lord.
The sting of need hath never touched these men;
The voices of the waste lands pass them by.
See where the rich farms drift, and boundless still
The virgin fallows where the wild grass springs
Green from the benediction of the clouds.
Withhold thy hand, Lord, till the plowman comes,
Retracing the far furrow, crying, '*Lo,*
The skirts of the long grass die off in sand
Where no rain falls!' Wait till the conquering Wheat,
Aghast at Something pale that followeth her,
Stares at the desert, and Thou shalt see the quick
Keen flash, and hear the rivers rushing down,
And Thou shalt know the West is still the West."

"Woe to the generations yet unborn!
The sun shall year by year withdraw his heat.
The moon shall say, '*Lo, thou too freezest, Earth,*'
And there shall be no mercy in the sky.
I too am one that garnereth, saith the Lord.
Ere yet the dinosaur awoke came I,

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A laborer where the sodden earth grew rank,
And put forth hand and took the tall green things.
Swamp grass and fern and forest, leaf on leaf,
I plucked and laid away beneath the hills,
Caching the primal suns against the day
When the White Terror should awake, and ice
Eat upward from the axles of the world.
Down the long cycles dragging fern and tree,
Think ye a fear was on Me, saith the Lord,
A shivering at the phantom of far snows?
Think ye I need a hearth Who made the suns,
Or power, I, Whose going forth is power?
I clothe with seasonable change the birds
That voyage forth, knowing the plume will come;
And on the ice I hear My polar calves
Laugh loud at the long setting of the suns.
But ye, but ye, O delicate of skin
And quick to tremble when the North is heard,
Forefearing that the Lord will add an inch
Unto the whiteness or withhold the South,
How dare ye, orphans of the sun, yield up
The Lord's provision, saying unto men,
'*Take ye the hoarded summers of the Lord*
And deal ye as it seemeth best to you;
Be ye the Lord'? Wherefore should I not say
To Cold and Hate and Hunger, '*Have your will.*
Run ye the furrow and plant ye the seed
And let the sluggards fill their barns with you'?"

"Bear with them, Lord, bear with them yet a while.

"New ways I opened for you, saith the Lord,
And now ye shy, side-glancing at the East.
'*We would be different if we kept the coal.*'
I made you to be different, saith the Lord.
I gave you wide horizons, in My Dream
Matching with brain the illimitable sky,
And fed you on My keen electric air

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That ye might rise and shake the yoke and laugh
And build ye shining cities meet for Truth.
And now ye say to men, '*Take ye the coal,*
Take ye the dark foundations of the Lord
And build ye as it seemeth best to you.'
Wherefore should I not yoke you, saith the Lord,
And make you sweat to jewel alien men?
How dare ye pluck the bloom of My design
And bring to nothingness the Dream I dreamed
What time My heart went forth and Silence rose,
Saying, '*I hear a singing. What is this?*'
And Hate and Hunger, looking backward, fled,
Crying, '*Alas! we have no part in her;*
The Lord hath made the Western peoples one.'
O up the dawn and sweetly up the eve
I heard the sea of power, wave on wave,
Break under wheels that sang, and tribes of men,
Irradiant with a glad creativeness,
Pass to and fro, singing before the Lord.
And I saw shining cities, meet for Truth,
Clasp link with perfect link and bind the land
Unsunderable and strong in perfect men.
And now ye palter while the golden thing
Blows off upon the waters and dissolves.
Lo, I will pass My Dream beyond the sea
Where wait My yellow children, eager men."

"Nay, Lord, nay, nay! Remember how of old
Thou didst bear the vacillation of the North,
The shifting and the counting gain and loss
When duty called. Bear with these younger States
That seem to palter in this crucial hour.
Remember that slow storm of elder days
And, seeing now what blooms along its wake,
Speak Thou above them in the silences.
Even now abroad the land a murmuring,
And on the mountains, see, the beacon fires!"

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" Woe to the generations yet unborn!
Ye shall go round and round as they of old
That bore the burden of the Pyramids.
Crumbs shall ye eat, crumbs of the wilderness,
And ye shall glean the waste for coffin wood.
I clothed the land with forests, saith the Lord,
Watchfully herded thro' the solitudes
Summer on perished summer the green trees,
Marshalling the larger girth to meet the blast
That gathers over Asia and the sea.
Needle and leaf, I drew them toward the sky
And, mindful of the parching of the land,
I gently taught them to allure the rains,
Voicing the thirst of the dumb pasturage.
Ere yet the sail hove up the tropic sea,
The twilight stars beheld One pace and pace
The aboriginal silence of the wood,
Timing the growth of saplings for that sail;
Or in the darker hours on mountain tops,
Passionately brooding on a wondrous thing.
'Here they shall come, My builders, perfect men,
And the glad woods shall meekly say, " Take ye,"
And they shall freely take and build for God.'
And now what is it I hear, what is it I see?
My winds come home with noises and with smoke,
With secret whispers and with bitter cries.
How dare ye give My forests unto men,
Ye with the cry of millions in your loins?
How dare ye say to men, *' Take ye the trees,*
Take ye the Lord's great plan and shape it, ye;
Build ye the building on the boundless plain
And fashion ye the porch for the long coast'?
How dare ye close eyes to the Ravager?
Think ye I have no windows, saith the Lord?
I see the slaughter and I smell the waste.
And now ye loose his lust upon that land
Conceived in My cold hours and richly clothed
And put far from you, in the northern sea.

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Wherefore should I not smite you, saith the Lord,
And rock the iron cities of the coast?"

O West that was our hope, O dear, dear West,
Land where the unfulfilled should break in bloom,
Thou gloriously uplifted in great ways
And chosen of the Lord to build the house
Where swaying millions should come home and sing,
Thou with thy mighty locks nearing the shears,
Shake off this fatal slumber and awake!
Release thy unborn children from the yoke!
Be thy great self! Reclaim thy heritage
Ere the Lord pass His Dream beyond the sea!

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OYSTERS: HUMAN AND NON-HUMAN

MARY DUDDERIDGE

Not the grief of the world, but the loss is the wonder of it. I see creatures so full of all power and beauty with none to understand or teach or save them. The making in them of miracles and all cast away, forever lost as far as we can trace.

RUSKIN.

THE oyster does not look like an interesting animal. To itself, no doubt, it is not interesting at all. It is barely conscious of its own life. Yet it is a wonderfully instructive creature, both from a biological and a philosophical standpoint. It lives at or near the mouths of rivers and feeds on the microscopic vegetable life that is maintained in great abundance by the sediment brought down by these streams, in the form of soft fine mud, from the lands over which they flow. After the very earliest stage of its existence, when it is a free-moving creature, it becomes fixed for life in one spot and makes no effort even to get its food, which is carried into its ever-open mouth in a continuous stream by the involuntary action of its gills. But this was not always so. The oyster is an animal that has seen better days. It once had organs of locomotion, and that not so very long ago, geologically speaking. It went whithersoever it would and possessed, no doubt, a little sense. The cause of its downfall was the struggle for existence. As the continents were elevated above the primordial sea and estuaries with soft muddy bottoms and abundant microscopic vegetation were formed, the ancestors of the oyster were driven by the force of competition to avail themselves of this supply of food, and their former freedom of motion became a disadvantage to them. They found it better to remain stationary just above the mud, a position not favorable, obviously, to intellectual development. So they gave up their power of movement, and settled down to the exhilarating life that we know, becoming mere organs of digestion and reproduction, with just sense enough left to close their shells at the approach of danger. They conquered in the

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struggle for existence. They have prospered greatly, and if they were human creatures might have been considered eligible for a "write-up" in that estimable but unhappily defunct magazine which was unable to live up to its title of *Success*. But they have lost everything that could have imparted any interest to their existence.

The survival of the oyster was the survival of the fittest in the sense in which that term is always used by science, namely, that of fitness to conditions. The law of the survival of the fittest does not mean, as the unthinking constantly assume, the survival of the best, mentally, morally or physically. The tendency of evolution seems to be upward. Through the ages one increasing purpose does appear to run. Toward what ultimate fitness it may be moving we cannot say, but we do know that "gradual progress toward perfection" is not, as Huxley has pointed out, "any necessary part of the Darwinian creed." Survival is no proof of any fitness other than that of fitness to environment, and human beings are no different in that respect from oysters or any other organism. Those survive who are best fitted to the conditions, and at the present time, and as far back as we know anything about the human species, the conditions seem to have been best fitted to the survival of oysters. The author of the book of Ecclesiastes complains bitterly and picturesquely of the fools who flourished in his day. We gather from the meditations of Marcus Aurelius that the Romans in the golden age of their empire were of the same class, and Carlyle tells us, in a famous utterance, that the population of England in his time were "mostly fools." Now neither Solomon nor Marcus Aurelius, and perhaps not even Carlyle, could be expected to know why fools should flourish like green bay trees, while the wise were perishing, but one would think that in this boasted age of science the reason for these things ought to be manifest to all. Science has been telling us for a good many years that conditions determine who shall survive, but we, ignorantly catching up her words, without their meaning, insist, in the teeth of the plainest evidence to the contrary, that the best always survive. It is a comfortable doctrine for those who happen to find their environment satisfactory and relieves them

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of much responsibility, but it is not true. As war takes our best and bravest, so the unarmed conflict that we miscall peace crushes out our choicest spirits.

That the constitution of human society has not conduced heretofore to the survival of the most desirable human types, or to the development of the possibilities of such as do escape elimination, is a thing so obvious that proof ought to be superfluous. Only that strong delusion to believe lies with which the human race is afflicted can account for the general blindness to the significance of facts which are, for the most part, the commonest of commonplaces.

One of the most striking examples of the influence of environment that history affords is so familiar to the present generation that it has become excessively wearisome and one is half inclined to apologize for mentioning it. This is the history of women. Does anyone suppose that it is only during the last century that women have been born with brains? Yet with the exception of a few sporadic cases, it is only during that period that they have manifested any considerable intellectual power. Does anyone suppose that Elizabeth, Victoria, Maria Theresa and the few other great feminine rulers of history were the only women who ever were born with political capacity, or that that capacity would have found some means of developing and expressing itself, no matter where the accident of birth had placed it? No one, surely, thinks anything of the kind. Yet women themselves, the victims of circumstances for ages, will assert as loudly as anyone else that the individual is the master of his fate.

There is a popular superstition, sedulously cultivated by Sunday School books and school readers, as well as by much adult literature, that genius is independent of circumstances. We know that we cannot grow potatoes on ground that is not cultivated, yet we expect the choicest flower of the human intellect to unfold on the stony ground of indifference, neglect and poverty. A wealthy convert to Socialism gave as one of his reasons for attacking the present social system that he wanted to give the ordinary young man a chance. "Of course," he said, mentioning Carnegie and Schwab by way of examples, "the extraordinary young man will rise." This is an almost universal belief, though

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it is strange to find it in the mouth of a Socialist, and in the case of men like Carnegie and Schwab it is partially justified. If a man has an extraordinary talent for highway robbery, that is, high finance, he stands some chance of "rising" under our present social system, if by that one means making money; and this is commonly supposed to compensate him for the darkening of his childhood and youth—those golden and irreclaimable years —by the sordid miseries of poverty. But if he has an extraordinary talent for art, or music, or literature, or anything that does not minister to the material needs or vanities of life, the proposition is a very different one. The chances that a person blessed, or cursed, with such talents will ever be able to develop them, or earn his bread by means of them, are none of the brightest. His chances of survival are much less than those of the ordinary person. The ordinary person can find his appropriate environment much more easily than the extraordinary one, and without the appropriate environment extraordinary powers cannot be exercised. That is why artistic and literary excellence is so seldom found in new countries. The artistic and literary genius is quite as likely, perhaps, to be born in the new country as in the old one, but the institutions and conditions necessary for his development are not there. The people, absorbed in the acquisition of material things, are not interested in, or have no time for anything else. They give no encouragement to the man or child of genius, either spiritually or materially. They cannot even recognize him. And so his gifts perish with no result except unspeakable suffering to himself.

In this country people are in the habit of lamenting greatly, from time to time, that they have no art, no music, no literature. Multi-millionaires they produce in abundance—"anomalous creatures," as Lombroso calls them, "bred in the hotbed of poverty and ignorance"; but few and far between are their masters of the spirit. Bridges and machinery and sky-scrapers they have, but one motif of the Nibelungenlied, one stanza of the Divine Comedy, outweighs them all. In luxury and ostentation none can compare with them, but where is their sweetness and their light? And we actually seem to think, most of us, that there is nothing we can do about it but to wait patiently till

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heaven sees fit to rain great painters, poets and musicians upon us. As a matter of fact such persons are probably being born here in as great numbers as anywhere else, but they rarely come to fruition.

The oyster cannot change its conditions, but we can. The mastery over fate popularly ascribed to the individual really does belong to society. As individuals we are well nigh helpless; collectively we are almost omnipotent. We can create our own environment. We can make the laws of nature work our will. We need not continue to be oysters unless we choose, nor sacrifice to mere material existence everything that gives any value to that existence. Material things, indeed, we must have. Life rests upon a material basis. The thoughts of the mind, the aspirations of the soul, are rooted in the dust. Human existence is truly, as the poet says, a contention between "low wants and lofty will," and we have used so little sense in the satisfaction of the former that the struggle has been a sadly unequal one. The greater part of mankind has been sacrificed to these "low wants," while the favored few have exercised what "lofty will" they could on the degradation of the many. Every fresh invention has served only to plunge us deeper in the mire of matter, and the material things on which our life depends have been made so hard to get that in our frantic and necessary struggle to secure them we mistake the means for the end, and with "pains and sweat and fury," in the expressive phrase of Emerson, we "arrive no whither."

There was a time when the slavery of the masses appears to have been unavoidable. The hard work of the world had to be done and there were only human hands to do it, while the life of the intellect is possible only to those who have been set free from such toil. Hence the emancipation of the few could be accomplished only by the enslavement of the many. But to-day, with our marvellous machines, machines Aristotle could not have conceived when he said that only by such means could slavery be abolished; with these and the still greater marvels that might be invented, if we would devote some of the time and strength that we now expend in fighting each other to the things that are really of consequence, why should not men be free? Why should the lightning serve us, and all the powers of earth and heaven obey

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our will, and man still be the thrall of his brother? Why should the masses be sunk in brutalizing toil, condemned from birth to want and tears, to degradation and despair, excluded from all the glories of the world of thought, all the beauties of art and the wonders of science, all the higher and finer things of life? Why should the social structure be built over the mouth of hell and no man know that his children or his grandchildren, if he himself escape, may not be precipitated into the nethermost abyss?

No one who knows anything can deny that we possess the means to make the material conditions of life easy, but as soon as we propose to do so we are met by the objection that it is necessary that they should be hard. Our esteemed ex-President, Mr. Taft, is of the opinion that human nature is "a material which can be moulded only on the anvil of adversity and tempered only in the furnace of economic strife." Economic security, he is convinced from his observation of the Government service, would have the effect of "diminishing energy and destroying initiative." Scientific persons assure us further that the material struggle for existence is necessary for the continuance of the race. We are told that with such a vast ancestry of lower life behind us, we can be saved from progressive deterioration only by a struggle which eliminates the weak. And lest there should be any escape from this depressing conclusion, we are informed that acquired qualities cannot be inherited. Thus there can be no way of maintaining and improving the human stock except by selection, by some means, of those who *happen* to be born superior to their fellows; and as the struggle for existence diminishes as we rise in the social scale, therefore society must constantly be renewed from the bottom. If this cheerful theory be correct, if we have got to go on forever living like beasts in the jungle, on pain of annihilation, it surely cannot matter what becomes of us. The sooner some friendly comet sweeps us out of existence, or we return to the state of our simian ancestors, the better. If a pitiless and never-to-be-ended warfare of every man against all other men is an indispensable condition of progress and continued existence, if the earth must forever be a field of slaughter and our peace more dreadful than the bloodiest war, it is hard to see

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how we are ever going to progress toward anything worth while. We might just as well degenerate, the quicker the better, for the lower we are the less we shall suffer.

If it be true that acquired characters cannot be inherited—and the consensus of scientific opinion is now in favor of that view—and if there is no way of eliminating undesirable and preserving desirable variations except by competition for the means of life, nature has truly brought us into a cul-de-sac, for that is no way at all. Its end is not life but death. Who ever heard of a farmer trying to improve his stock by any such means? Fancy a breeder throwing a limited amount of food to his animals and letting them struggle with one another for it in the expectation that the fit would get their share and the unfit be crowded out. Or a gardener who should omit to thin his flowers and vegetables on the theory that the strongest would be sure to survive and be all the better for the struggle. Both breeder and gardener know that even if the fittest did survive, they would be made not only less fit but probably quite useless by such a contest; and so they remove the animals and plants they wish to raise entirely from the influence of competition and from adverse conditions of all kinds. In this way they accomplish more in a few years than nature without their assistance could do in a thousand years, or in any number of them. Without the protection from competition afforded by the strong arm of man, the apple would quickly degenerate into the crab, and the garden strawberry into the wild variety. Our gardens would become wildernesses. We know these things perfectly well, yet we have not sense enough to protect ourselves from this hideous power. If we had we might be gods instead of oysters. The potentialities of the human soul cannot be measured. Eye hath not seen nor heart conceived the things that are possible to man; not in some dim and distant heaven, on some other planet, in some other state of existence, but here in the time of this mortal life, on this earth which we have so long and so truly called a vale of tears.

It is unfortunately true that human society exhibits a tendency to die out at the top and is to a great extent renewed from the bottom; but there is no reason for attributing the fact, as is constantly done, to the slackening of the struggle for existence

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in the upper social strata. Sir Francis Galton, whose researches into the reasons for the extinction of British peerages are often quoted to illustrate the baleful effects of material ease, discovered the astonishing fact that the extinct families had been destroyed by heiresses. In order to maintain the dignity of their positions peers have married heiresses, and as an heiress is usually an only child she inherits a tendency to sterility. Combined with this blighting influence is the tendency of younger sons to remain unmarried—unless they too can find heiress wives—because of the difficulty of maintaining a family and a high social position at the same time. It is not material ease which has blighted the peerage, therefore, but the material difficulty of maintaining its dignity, and the same influences are operative among the upper and middle classes generally. The material difficulty of maintaining a superior social position is so great and the penalty of falling beneath it so terrible that persons of any sense would rather become extinct racially than take any such risks. To the unreflecting poor, therefore, is left the major part of the task of replenishing the earth.

So far as numbers are concerned society is undoubtedly renewed from the bottom, but what other kind of renewal can we expect from this source? The wrecks of the terrible struggle that goes on continually at the base of the social pyramid fill our institutions with the blind, the deaf, the crippled, the defective, the insane and the criminal. And those who are left are blighted and dwarfed in mind and body. No definite statistics regarding the physical degeneracy of the less favored classes have been secured in America, but in Europe the superiority of the children of the well-to-do classes over those in less fortunate circumstances has been established by numerous tests. The pathos of these cold statistics, showing how the height, weight and chest measurements of school children vary in proportion to the fees which their parents are able to pay, is beyond expression. Their menace to posterity ought to stir the souls of the most complacent. If society must depend for its existence on new blood coming from such sources, we are damned beyond hope of redemption.

In the cultivation of plants and animals selection is controlled by human intelligence instead of being left to the crude and

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clumsy processes of nature, but the methods employed are not such as can be applied to the breeding of human creatures. We cannot mate men and women as the breeder mates animals, or the gardener crosses plants. Neither can we eliminate undesirable individuals with the same indifference. But it is not at all necessary that we should. Nature herself has given us a substitute for her own crude and cruel selective processes—" a pure and beautiful form of selection," as Wallace calls it, " a selection which will act not through struggle and death but through brotherhood and love." This is selection through marriage. It is just as " natural " as economic selection, but although we fear to interfere with the latter lest all manner of evil come upon us, we suspend the operation of the former without the slightest compunction. We have made of marriage a commercial contract. By the separation of sexes and classes we have so narrowed the field of choice that persons who by all the laws of nature should have been mates never have an opportunity to meet or know each other. Through our neglect of infancy and our tolerance of perfectly needless industrial accidents we have destroyed the natural excess of males in the population, so that many women whose motherhood would have blessed the race have been obliged to remain unmarried, while any man, no matter how undesirable as a parent, can secure a mate. By this reversal of the natural numerical relations of the sexes, combined with the economic dependence of women, we have furthermore practically deprived the sex most deeply concerned in this relation of its natural right of choice in marriage; and by our economic pressures and uncertainties we have forced very many of the persons whose intelligence we would most desire to transmit to posterity to postpone until late in life or forego altogether the joys of marriage and parentage. In a rationally constituted society all these things would be changed, and supplemented by the intelligence which people might be expected to develop under these conditions, sexual selection, acting, as Wallace points out, " through the agency of well known facts and principles of human nature," would lead to a " continuous reduction of the lower types in each successive generation."

That men will not put forth their best efforts unless the

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sword of Damocles is hanging constantly over their heads, or without the hope of those "exceptional rewards for exceptional service," to which Mr. Taft attaches so much importance, is a contention which the commonest observation disproves. Men are constantly working to the utmost of their power when there is no necessity whatever for their doing so, and some cannot be deterred from serving humanity by any amount of abuse and ingratitude. These of course are elect souls; somehow our gladiators' show does occasionally produce them. But even the most ordinary people have a desire to work, and when excluded from legitimate fields of labor, as so many women are, they create all sorts of useless activities for themselves. That most people do not like to work for their living under present conditions is no cause for alarm or wonder. A great deal of nonsense —which nobody believes—is talked about the dignity and joy of labor. Congenial and useful work, in moderation and with sufficient remuneration, *is* dignified and one of the greatest joys in life; but the hard, continuous, disagreeable and often totally unnecessary work which the world requires most of us to perform at present—for somebody else's benefit—as a condition of existence is neither dignified nor joyful. It is ruinous to mind, health and morals, and it is no wonder that everyone seeks to escape from it by every means possible.

Can we find no higher law to live by than that of might? Is it flying in the face of nature to ask for one? Supposing it is. Huxley, who ought to be considered as good an authority on such subjects as Professor Taft, tells us that "social progress means the checking of the cosmic process at every step and the substitution for it of what may be called the ethical process." This too is nature, and it is not so contrary to nature unmodified by that human intelligence which is its product as most people imagine. There is no subject, in fact, regarding which more misconception exists than that of the place of competition in nature. Even the most eminent scientific thinkers have talked as though competition were *the* law of life, and lesser minds have seized upon the idea with a kind of ferocity, indicating a latent affinity for the law of selfishness, proclaiming it so loudly and

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dogmatically that the most unwilling have been forced to believe that the existence of the race depended on continual warfare and that the very stars would be turned from their courses by any violation of the sacred principle that might is right. This is simply not so. The ruthless warfare of nature in which we have been taught to believe is a figment of the scientific imagination, a fetish to which this generation has bowed down as blindly as any heathen to his gods of wood and stone. Nature is hideous enough, but her garments are not entirely rolled in blood. There is no denying the law of competition, but it is not the only law of nature. There is also a law of co-operation which goes back to the very beginnings of life, a law of love which is rooted in our flesh and in our bones, for our bodies are built up by the co-operation of cells, and the evolution of all higher life began when a few isolated cells formed a co-operative colony. Everywhere in nature, in all stages of evolution, there is co-operation as well as competition, and when we reach the human level we find these two instincts struggling with each other for ascendency, one tending ever to drag man down to the level of the beasts, the other to exalt him to the estate of the angels. These two tendencies form the dual nature which philosophers have recognized in man. The downward tendency is the original sin which the theologians have imputed to him. The warfare between these two forces constitutes the sum of human history, and in this warfare the principle of love, in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles and much appearance to the contrary, has steadily gained on that of hatred. The gates of hell could not prevail against it. We have stoned our prophets and crucified our Christ, but after they are dead we honor the prophets, and after a score of centuries we have come to have some dim perception of what the Carpenter of Nazareth meant to teach. Some of us have come to the point where we cannot run our brother down as if he were an orang-outang, and most of us do not want to kill him with a club, although we are still quite willing to kill him with a factory or a tenement or any other instrument that does not necessitate our witnessing his dying agonies. This weakness, as we are so often asked to consider it, has come to us in the course of evolution as truly as claws have come to the tiger, or venom to

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the serpent. It has been born out of the very heart of competition itself, like "purity out of a stain." There must be some room for it in the economy of nature. With age-long travail and pain, with blood and tears and great tribulation the earth has brought forth this divine thing, the only thing that gives any beauty or dignity to human existence, or casts any light upon its mystery. It cannot be for naught. We have tried warfare and hatred and found them wanting. It is surely time to try something else. It may be that the Apostle to the Gentiles was wiser than we thought when he wrote: "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Those who do not regard these words as an empty piece of sentimentality commonly consider them a counsel of perfection, having no bearing on the practical affairs of life; but we may perhaps find that they are the hardest kind of common sense and that in them lies the healing of the nations.

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HIS IMMORTALITY

REGINALD WRIGHT KAUFFMAN

THERE was nobody in the neighborhood that Nance hated quite so much as she hated Big Bill—and Nance was a good hater.

I wish that I could make you know Nance as I knew her in those old days when the lower East Side was her home and mine, and when we used to meet, once in a way, for a late supper at the ——. But no matter; I shall have simply to tell you the bare facts about Nance, and let you judge for yourself. In the one really great event of her life I played no part whatever, unless a phonograph may be said to play a part in the life of the opera-star that sings into it. I was her friend—really her friend, and not at all her friend in the way in which you and most other men employ the term as between one of our sex and one of the other sex—and what I here set down was what she told me not long after Nance made her Great Adventure.

I don't suppose that you would have called Nance a beautiful woman—unless, perhaps, you saw her dressed for work. In spite of the name that we all knew her by, and in spite of her English that seemed native to her, she was a French girl of peasant stock; not the diminutive and perfectly corseted Parisienne, you understand; but a girl from the provinces—from some remote countryside in the provinces—and, although she never told even me much about her origin, I always set her down as a native of the Midi. She was a big, strapping girl, taller than the average man, and splendidly proportioned. If you can imagine Venus de Milo with red cheeks—naturally red cheeks, mind you; the red of good health and leaping vitality—and a mouth that was like a generous rose and black eyes that could snap with mirth and dart the lightnings of anger—you have, physically, something of the Nance that I knew. I have seen her knock down a Broadway masher with the most careless of blows; I have seen her break a beer-bottle over the head of Terry Callahan, who used to be bouncer at Tom Sharkey's; and

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I have seen her hold a baby in her arms with all the tenderness and all the love of a mediæval Madonna.

Of course, when she was in what she called her business-clothes, she was stunning. In winter she affected a long fur cloak that came nearly to her ankles—a coat of some black fur, with a toque to match—which set off the color in her cheeks and made men gasp when they laid eyes on her; and in summer she donned simple frocks of white, which served her quite as well. But at home, which is to say in her shifting East Side tenements, she was the French peasant girl again, speaking an English that belonged to the Bowery, but dressing and thinking and living her own primitive life. She wasn't neat then and she wasn't refined, and I dare say that you would not have looked twice at her. Besides, she presented a combination that you would have believed a contradiction in terms: Nance was a shop-lifter by profession and, by inclination, what you call a "good" girl.

I do not attempt to explain this. I have met so many similar contradictions among Nance's friends that they have ceased to be contradictions to me; but I know full well how improbable the situation seems to your sophisticated senses; so I merely set down the fact as a fact, and I ask you to accept it from me as from one that knows definitely what he is talking about; with none of the other virtues that make your women-friends ladies, Nance had and held through many a battle that one virtue without which, according to your standard, no woman is a lady.

Perhaps in part because of this, since there is no way so easy and hence so common to catch a criminal as through the person that the criminal loves, Nance remained uncaught. Her police-record, after five years of successful operations in all the worth-while Broadway and Fifth Avenue stores, was absolute zero. Not only had she never been convicted; she had never even been placed under arrest.

Don't ask me how she contrived this. I do not know. I know only that it is true. Everybody is aware, nowadays, that the house-detectives in the big stores make deals with certain favored shop-lifters; but I have every reason to believe that

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Nance never entered such a deal. She merely, somehow, managed to remain above suspicion.

Not that sheer utility was her motive for avoiding amorous entanglements. It was not. I remember one evening looking at her strong figure, her glowing cheeks and vital eyes and asking her why she did not "tie up"—that was the East Side phrase for it in my day—with somebody.

I can still see her toss her wonderful head as she answered.

"It'd be hard to put a man wise to that," she said—when at work, she spoke Fifth Avenue; when at rest, East Side. "But it's just because I want to be my own boss. When a fellow gets a girl, he takes; when a girl gets a fellow, she gives. See what I mean?"

I nodded.

"No, you don't," she went on. "No man ever does. It ain't as if I t'ought one thing was crooked an' the other on the level. Not me. I'm my own bale o' goods. I can hand it over or keep it on the shelf. But when it gets across the counter, it belongs to the guy that pays for it, an' as long's it's on the shelf it's mine. I t'ink so little about doin' what people calls wrong that it ain't no temptation to do it. Do you get me now?"

I never inquired of her how she came to be a shop-lifter, and she never told me. There is, in the Jungle, an etiquette quite as exacting as that which obtains in the cities of the plain, and its reticences are binding. From a word or two dropped here and there through our long intimacy, I came to guess that poverty had started her, as poverty sooner or later will start most men and women on whom it fastens its fingers; but directly she never offered any explanation, and in her withholding of all explanation there was a dignity that I honored. It was enough for me to know that she was Nance and that, shop-lifter though she might be, no man had ever won her.

Win her a great many men undoubtedly tried to do. They tried it in the open, frank manner of the criminal classes, and the various methods of their wooing, not to mention the question of their relative chances, was one of the most fruitful sources

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of speculative conversation that our little group of intimates possessed.

Now it was Con Davis that seemed to have the lead, and now Baby Hen Schultz was the best bet. There was a time when nearly all of us—although I never really thought so much of it—would have put our money on a pool-room sharp whom we all knew intimately yet named only as "Blondie." There were wire-tappers and second-story men, gunmen, gangsters, procurers and even one or two members of the gambling fraternity that formed our aristocracy. There were well-dressed men and ill-dressed, men that lavished money and men that threatened blows. But not one of them copped out Nance. They would appear and flutter, and disappear, and Nance would remain. She liked them all and loved not one. It was Big Bill who persisted, and only Big Bill won her hate.

"Sometime," said Nance, "I'm goin' t' get that guy. You take it from me."

I didn't blame her: Big Bill possessed about as few of the moral qualities as it is possible for a man to possess and keep alive on. I have a theory that, though good men may, and do, die daily, no man can continue long alive after all the good has gone out of him. It seems to me that a certain modicum of goodness, though it be not always what the world would so describe, is as necessary to the life of the soul as blood is to the life of the body, and that when the soul ceases to make goodness for itself to run on as the body makes blood, the man dies as surely as if he had severed a major artery. Judged in the terms of this theory, Big Bill, the huskiest man of my acquaintance, was, and had long remained, *in extremis*.

He was a wonder. He was six feet three and a half inches high and broad accordingly. He could plait the black hair on his huge chest and tie ribbons on it, and I once saw him win ten dollars by performing in reality a trick that most of us know only as a proverb: he felled a steer with one blow of his sledge-hammer fist. His coat-sleeves were continually straining over his biceps, yet he was not muscle-bound. When he was stripped, the muscles of his back crawled like entangled boa-constrictors. He was the strongest man between the East River and Fifth

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Avenue, and yet, at thirty-five, he had spent eleven years in jail.

When he was twelve years old, Bill had gone to the New York Juvenile Asylum for breaking his school-teacher's head: "Opened it like an oyster," he used to remark. Released from there, after various rebellions, in one of which he snapped a monitor's arm across his knee, he began a career that led directly from election-rows, where he laid up the men most dangerous to the precinct-boss, to a more or less regular business in highway robbery. In the Asylum he had wanted to learn the blacksmith's trade, but the authorities put him in the tailor-shop; he hated that work and did not learn it: in his final occupation he was proficient. He could tell at a glance almost to the dime how much money was carried by any passer-by; he selected his prey, followed it into a dark street, knocked it down, robbed it and walked away. When the police caught him anywhere near the scenes of these crimes, his conviction was a foregone conclusion; but they did not often find Big Bill until he had placed a considerable distance between him and his victim and had arranged with a few pals for an alibi.

Bill was not a handsome man. His head was bullet-like, and his neck thick; the black hair, always matted, grew low on his forehead; his mouth and jaw were heavy; his nose was a decided "pug," and his eyes were sullen. Yet he was so nearly perfect physically that he was a splendid example of what the human body can be made. He was not what the few like, but what the many adore: not Apollo, but Hercules. I used to say to myself that he was just the type of man that Nance would end by accepting, and I used to wonder why she seemed to dislike him.

For Bill was set upon conquering Nance's affections from the first time he saw her. That was one evening, a whole year before the end, when he bumped into her as she was returning to her lonely tenement-room with a bucket of beer. Long afterwards, Nance told me what happened, and I merely tell what followed in my own words.

"Look where you're goin'," said Nance, as she with difficulty saved the beer from disaster. "You must t'ink you own the street."

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Bill did not look where he was going. There was a lamp-post beside them, and, under its light, he looked steadily at Nance. What he saw pleased him.

"If I owned the street, I'd wrap it up in a bundle an' give it to you for Christmas," he said.

"Aw, go on," said Nance—and oh, Nance, I can see the light in your eyes as you said it!—"You're kind of half-shot, you are."

Bill had guessed her destination, perhaps from some movement on her part. At any rate, he backed against the door that she was making for, and there quietly blocked the way.

"I ain't so lit up but I could help you drink that beer," he said.

"Get out," Nance answered. "I know who you are, all right, all right. Get away now an' lemme in."

"If you give me a drink, maybe I will," said Bill, who doubtless liked to know that his fame had reached this girl with the eyes of a deer and the walk of a panther.

"I will not," Nance vowed. "I'm not runnin' no free-soup kitchen."

Bill put a great fist into his pocket and rattled many coins: "I can pay for what I get."

"Then go over to Grady's saloon an' buy a glass: these here suds ain't for sale. Go on, now: I'm warnin' you."

Bill took his hand from his pocket. He grinned.

"If you give me a drink," he said, "I'll give you a kiss."

Nance said nothing. She put out her left arm and seized Bill's collar. She meant to swing the giant from his place.

She nearly succeeded, too. Bill was unused to opposition from the inhabitants of the East Side; still less, being the conqueror of a hundred feminine hearts, was he used to opposition from women. Nance was sudden, and Bill swayed aside.

He was a little angry. As she darted by him, he seized her hair in one hand and with the other tilted her chin until their lips almost met.

Then Nance threw the beer in his face.

"There's your drink for you!" she cried, and, under cover

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of the ensuing confusion, she ran upstairs and locked herself in her own room.

She was beerless, but unkissed.

II

Nance had gone to her corner with all the noticed points in her favor. She had the better of it for the first round; but what had happened was, and she and all of us knew it, only the first round of what must be a fight to the finish. Neither of these combatants was of the sort that goes in for a half-way contest.

The news of the encounter spread among us with that rapidity with which such news always spreads in such a community, and we all fell to watching its progress, gossiping about its changes and speculating upon its result with the avidity with which a more refined society watches, gossips and speculates when a similar situation arises between two prominent members of its especial circle. It was with us exactly as it is with the rich when the man-hating heiress of the town's biggest millionaire is pursued by the town's best polo-player. In that case, I am informed, women talk it over at teas while their husbands, sons and lovers lay wagers on it in the club-windows. In our society, the wife of Mr. Grady, the saloon-keeper, discussed Big Bill's chances with Mrs. Charley Netter, who said she was the wife of Diamond Charley, our chief gambling-house proprietor, and Mrs. Mol Henry, the question of whose husband it was not polite to raise, but who did a comfortable business as a receiver of stolen goods; while Grady and Diamond Charley and Ikie Bloom, who was on good terms with Mol, made bets in the room at the rear of Grady's place of business.

Bill certainly fought well. He tried every acknowledged mode of attack, and he invented a few new methods.

At the start he merely kept on nagging Nance. The next time he passed her in the street—and he unostentatiously arranged that this should be soon after the affair of the beer-kettle—he stopped in front of her and bowed with an exaggerated leer.

"Doin' a good business at your bath-house?" he inquired.

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Nance glared and stepped around the bulky obstruction that he presented to her progress.

He pursued his line of unappreciated pleasantry for a week or ten days, and when it was forced upon his intelligence that he was working on a false hypothesis, he began to frequent Nance's haunts and offer her his more serious courtesies. He approached her and asked her to supper, and she haughtily refused. Once he mentioned a day at Coney Island, was laughed at for considering her "a perfume-counter skirt"—by which term Nance referred to the young ladies that are employed in certain departments of the large stores—and when Bill hastily substituted Atlantic City for Coney he was warned that he would find no favor even were he to suggest a private yacht to Newport.

"What do you really think of him?" I asked Nance as, one evening, she sat with me in that back room of Grady's place.

She looked at me as we all knew she had been looking at Big Bill for two months past.

"If you can't tell from the way I treats him," said Nance, "you're too big a fool to try to make it plain to."

"But," I protested, "the way that a woman treats a man isn't any sign of what she thinks of him."

"It is with this woman," said Nance. "It's a dead sure sign."

I tried to draw her out.

"I believe you're afraid of him."

"Me? Of that guy? What do you take me for?"

"He can whip any fellow on the avenue. He has whipped most of us." I recalled a little occurrence that does not belong to this story. "As a matter of fact, he whipped me about a week ago."

"Huh!" sniffed Nance. "I could do that myself."

I knew that she could and I knew that, for all her friendly feeling for me, if I annoyed her too much she undoubtedly would. Still I dared a bit longer.

"You are afraid of him," I repeated.

"Not much, I'm not," Nance answered. "If he dared fight square he might do for me. I'd give him a good run for his money even then, but he'd do for me if he dared fight square.

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Only he wouldn't dare. He's only a hold-up man, an' he wouldn't dare. He knows it, an' he knows I know it."

"Well, I thought some women liked a man that was weaker —somebody they could mother."

"Gee! T'ink o' me motherin' Big Bill!" The picture amused her, but she took her fine, wild eyes from it. "No," she said, "I do what I got to, but my man, if I ever get one, he's got to be different. I don't like Bill for the same reason I don't like none o' the other fellows round here. You know what I mean: I like 'em all right, but I couldn't like 'em that way—never. I couldn't tie up with no guy that was a brute, or a sneak, or a yellow dog. All our fellows are one or other o' them t'ings, but they don't try to bother me. Well, Big Bill does try to bother me, an' he's all three o' them t'ings I said, an' more o' them t'ings than any other guy in the whole avenue-gang."

As time went on, Bill changed his tactics again and again. He was too proud to enlist any of his friends in his service—he would plead his own cause and win it, or else he would lose it alone—but he would essay every means in his power, and I think he tried them all.

Once, I remember, there had been a particularly ugly hold-up within a block of Diamond Charley's gambling-establishment. The police were annoyed because the victim who had just left Charley's place with ten thousand dollars in his pocket, turned out to be a prominent politician from a remote but powerful West Side ward, very nearly died from the fractured skull received at the butt of his assailant's revolver, and, recovering, had pull enough to make things warm for the police when they could arrest no likely person. Charley was angry because the episode occurred so close to his house that it cast upon him the suspicion of "fixing" anybody that won too heavily there, not to mention the fact that, large as was the sum he regularly paid for police-protection, this particular victim might visit him with vengeance. But, within three days, Big Bill was spreading himself in his favorite haunts dressed in a glory that, even could he have afforded it, not another man of the avenue would have dared assume.

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Nobody ventured to criticise. The clothes did not become their wearer—nothing but a tiger-skin over his great shoulders would ever have seemed a fitting drapery for Big Bill—but we were all unwholesomely afraid of his mighty fist. So those of us who were not such liars as to flatter held our peace.

Bill spent right and left the money that he carried in those new clothes. He spent it before Nance's eyes, and he pretended not to see Nance or that she pretended not to see him. He kept this up for some time and then, following her and overtaking her in the street one afternoon, he held out to her a hundred-dollar bill. He held it so that its denomination was obvious.

Nance flushed darkly. I happen to know that she was rather hard up just then, but her arms remained at her sides.

"What's that?" she asked.

"It's yours," said Bill. He looked at her, and his heavy face weakened a little. "If you can use it," he added.

"I can't," said Nance.

Bill tried to laugh.

"I t'ought you might want to build a new wing to your bath-house."

"Not with your money I don't," said Nance. It was enough, but, as she eyed him, instinct told her that she could wound him in another way. "You look like a Dago barber in them clothes," she concluded.

Even after so many rebuffs from her, he had not expected this one. He bit his lip, because he was hurt; and then he squared his jaw, because he was angry.

"All right," he said, "there's lots o' girls that will take it."

He left her, and the next few weeks proved the truth of his prediction. Not that he required money to win women. The list of his conquests was notoriously the largest on the avenue. Big Bill had been loved by scores. Until Nance's path crossed his, it had been accepted as an axiom among us that he need but beckon and they would run to him. We had all believed that he could win whom he chose, and hitherto his choice had been so varied that even the avenue-gang shook their heads at it.

Now, however, he went beyond all this. He was seen in a motor with Mrs. Charley Netter; he stole Cock-eye Cusenier's

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sweetheart Alice, and when Cock-eye shot at him, he broke that despairing swain's jaw. There were also other feminine victims to his charms. And he took care to show himself with these in Nance's view.

Then he sought out Nance and said he wanted her to marry him and go to Chicago, where he had the chance of partnership in that city's largest gambling-house; and Nance, of course, refused. Next he tried the effect of absenting himself for two months, presumably at the Chicago Palace of Chance, and, returning, found that the effect was nil. And after that he engaged upon a series of hold-ups so vicious and so daring that we all knew he was due for a trip up the river—which is to say, certain of a term in Sing Sing—within a brief number of weeks. Big Bill didn't care. "Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad": Bill, who rarely drank to excess in the old days, went on a prolonged spree, ran amuck and, one after the other, thrashed, brutally and inhumanly, every one of his friends that he could find.

He wound up with Nance. By this time he was in that terrible stage of cold cruelty which, in some physiques, mimics sobriety and succeeds the more patent but less dangerous violence of drunkenness. He climbed the dark stairs—for it was evening now—to her door and knocked.

There was no response; but Bill was sure that he heard a board creak inside the room. He knocked again, more loudly now.

"Nance," he said.

No answer.

"Nancy, lemme in."

Still silence. Bill put his mouth to the keyhole.

"Nance," he said in a low, ugly voice, "I want to see you. D'you hear? This is Bill. You know I don't mind a little trouble. If you don't open this door, I'll smash it."

He heard her step now: it crossed the room, lithe and steady.

She flung wide the door and stood there, an Amazonian figure, silhouetted against the light from within.

"This is the limit," she said. Her voice was as low as his had been, but he could see her broad bosom rise and fall under

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her thin blouse. "If you don't go, an' go right away, I'll knock you down them stairs."

She meant it. She had opened the door only because she knew how frail it was and how certain he would be to break it. She might have run away by the fire-escape, but she was not yet in a mood to run. She raised a threatening hand.

Bill was too quick for her. He sprang under her arm and into the room. He turned, caught her by the hair, as she, too, turned, dragged her in and slammed the door behind them.

"Now," he swore, "we'll see who's boss."

His eyes were slits of slow fire; his brute-face was chalky white. With one hand twisted in her loosened hair, he put the other to her throat and forced her to her knees before him.

She looked up at him, her face red with futile rage. I know that she must have been more handsome than ever.

"What do you want?" she demanded.

He bent over and tightened his hold.

"You," said Bill.

In the grip of his dreadful hands, she laughed at him.

"Not on your life," she answered.

"It's *your* life," said Bill. It was he who was breathing heavily now: he was breathing heavily from the something so like hate that boiled in his heart and throbbed in his temples. "You know me. I ain't afraid of a killin'. Think it over."

"I don't have to!"

He bent lower. His breath beat on her face.

"It'll be all straight," he said. "You can pick your own preacher. Give me your promise, an' I'll go 'way now an' come for you with the minister to-morrow. T'row me down an'—an' I'll kill you, Nance."

The lamp was on the small centre table. Its light was full upon her, but in her splendid eyes he saw only a fearless defiance.

"Then," said Nance, "you can kill now an' be damned."

He drew back. He could scarcely believe her, and yet he did believe her. He pulled himself together. He choked her suddenly until the red cheeks grew purple.

"Now," he said, and loosened his fingers for her answer.

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She spluttered and writhed. She could not speak, but her eyes looked her hatred. She shook her head.

Bill tightened his grip ever so little.

"I love you!" he said.

An attempted smile twisted her swollen lips, a smile of scornful unbelief.

Bill again loosened his fingers.

"Then why—" she gasped.

"*That's* why," said Bill. "I'm killin' you because I love you, an' you won't have me." He paused. "Why won't you have me, Nance?" he asked, but there was no pleading in his tone: his tone was a threat.

She knew this. She knew that here was her chance to temporize. But, among all her faults, Nance had not the vice with which she now fearlessly, looking at her death as it was plainly written in his face, charged Bill.

"Because you're a coward," she said.

"A *what?*"

In his amazement he nearly released her. She might have charged him with every other sin, and he would have gloried in its acknowledgment. But the sin of cowardice——

"Yes, you are," she cried, her voice regained: "A coward—a coward—a *coward!* The worst sort: the brute, sneak, yellow-dog sort. You wouldn't hold up nobody of your own size if he was ready for you. You've licked all the avenue-boys because they was afraid of your loud mouth, an' you wouldn't 'a' dared tackle no one of 'em if you hadn't 'a' knowed they all *was* afraid. You got all these girls runnin' after you because they was afraid of you. An' now you t'ink I'm like the rest, an' you try it on with me. You bully me 's if I was as big a coward as all the boys is—an' you are yourself. An' the first crack out o' the box, you run away when I t'rows a can o' suds at you!"

His back was toward the door. He knew that he had let his right hand fall from her throat. He did not know that his left hand had released her hair and that the rickety door had swung open behind him.

Like the panther that she was, Nance, whose eyes had missed

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nothing, and who had gathered herself for the spring, shot to her feet and brought the top of her skull into smashing contact with the point of Bill's jaw. In the same instant, she planted a fist in the pit of his stomach, and under the weight of those twin blows, Bill reeled out of the room and fell in a heap on the landing.

When he came to himself a moment later, the door was locked. When he had broken the door open, the room was empty: Nance, expecting this renewal of attack, had fled for the night by the fire-escape.

That was the night when Diamond Charley Netter was killed. A man goaded by thwarted blood-lust went into Charley's gambling-house. According to next day's newspapers, he taunted the proprietor with Mrs. Netter's escapades and, when ordered away, shouted that he would kill Charley and did so by knocking him down with the handiest chair. The murderer got away before any of the frightened patrons of the place dared to interfere. And the murderer was Big Bill.

III

At ten o'clock the next night Nance was seated in her room, reading the last edition of an evening paper, which, under a headline that spread itself across two columns, declared that, though Big Bill had not yet been captured, the police were sure that he had not left town, that their watchers at stations and ferries now made his departure impossible, and that his arrest was but a question of hours.

"Well," she thought, "it was a low-down job. If they get him it's the chair for Bill, sure—an' I hope they get him."

She heard a light tapping at her window-pane. The window opened on the fire-escape, and the fire-escape led to an alley. She turned.

There was a face at the window—Big Bill's.

Without so much as a start, Nance walked to the window and threw it wide.

"Come in," she said.

He leaped in lightly; leaned out again and scrutinized, to

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right and left, the dark alley far below. Then he shut the window and drew the blind.

"Put that there lamp on the floor between us an' the window," he said. "We don't want no shadows givin' us away."

She obeyed him and, as he sat down panting, looked at him with what seemed a mild interest.

If Bill had not appeared handsome at their last encounter, twenty hours of hiding in the best hiding-places of New York's East Side had not improved his appearance. His great bulk seemed to have shrunken; his head, under dampened hair, drooped toward his chest. His mouth lolled like a despairing runner's, and his clothes and face were spattered with mud.

"You need a drink," said Nance coldly.

His heavy lips parted, but a nod was his sole reply.

Nance produced a bottle and a glass. She poured him some whiskey, which his shaking hand nearly spilled.

"Where you been?" she asked.

Bill gulped the liquor.

"Most everywhere. The gang's all down on me now. You seen what happened?"

"Yes."

"Well, the gang was all tied up with Charley, so they're layin' for me as hard as the cops is. I been in that stable"—he jerked his bullet-like head to indicate the direction of the alley—"since seven o'clock."

"You can't clear out o' town?"

"No chance. They got fly-cops everywheres—even the tunnel-stations. I tried some. They 'most spotted me at Cortlandt Street an' at Twenty-third an' Six' Avenue before I spotted them."

Nance planted herself before him and looked down at him, arms akimbo, her fine head tilted back, her nostrils dilated with scorn.

"An' you knowed everyone knowed how I hated you, an' this'd be the last place they'd t'ink you'd be?"

His white face flushed.

"It ain't that—" he began, and stopped short.

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"Then what was it? I never liked Charley, but I didn't want to see him croaked. What was it? You've knowed me near a year, Bill, an' you'd ought to know by now what I t'ink of you. I like your nerve. This'd ought to be the worst hang-out you'd dare come to."

His narrow eyes met hers.

"Then why'd you let me in?" he asked.

Yes, that was it! Why had she let him in? It was not because she would have been afraid to deny him: the first glance through the window at Bill's changed face had told her that he was no longer anything to fear. Perhaps she had acted on the impulse that controls so many of the enemies of society: the impulse to aid the flight of whomsoever society pursues. Perhaps it was a development of this— Ah, she had it now! She looked at him with a mixture of dislike and pity.

"I let you in," she said, "because you looked more'n ever what I said you was last night."

His thick lips trembled. His haggard eyes, wide enough now, met hers.

"A coward?" he asked.

"Yep, a coward, Bill."

His expression did not change.

"Well," he said, "that's what I counted on. I doped it out like this: The fellows is sore on me for this here killin', an' if I got any of 'em to hide me it'd be somewheres where the cops'd look for me, an' it'd be trustin' to somebody I couldn't trust a lot; it'd be done for me because the guy was afraid o' me, an' so he'd be lookin' for a chance to give me up. But there was you. You wasn't afraid o' me. Whatever you done you'd do because you was sorry for me now I was in wrong——"

"Well, I ain't sorry you're in wrong."

"I don't mean it that way. I mean I doped it that whatever you'd do for me'd be because you wasn't no coward an' knowed I was a coward, an' not bein' no coward yourself an' knowin' I was, you'd feel better to me than anybody'd feel to me if he was afraid o' me. See what I mean?" He seemed desperately anxious that she should understand. "I counted on this: that nobody can't be kind to somebody they're afraid of,

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but everybody's got to be kind to somebody's they've got the better of."

Nance's arms had fallen to her side. What, she wondered, had happened to this man? Could a day's flight and hiding thus change one? This was the bully who had choked her and threatened her life, this almost cringing creature that now talked in sincerity about the impossibility of cruelty on the part of the powerful toward the powerless! Hate as she had hated the brute, she hated more the moral weakling. Her soul revolted at this visualized concept of strength so turned to drivelling weakness. She wanted to see the former frightful Bill again. She wanted to lash him into his old self. Her hands clenched. She leaned forward.

"You're a nice one!" she cried. "You're a nice t'ing to look at, you are. You been a fine bluff, ain't you? I was right: I didn't half believe it when I said it last night, but I know it now—you *are* a coward!"

"I *am!*"

The phrase blazed from him suddenly. He jumped to his feet. He stood before her another man—a third Bill, a man that she had never known before. His face worked, his massive chest heaved; a torrent of words rushed from his lips.

"I'm a coward all right, all right!" he said. "But not the kind you t'ink. Not that. I never was an' never could be. I can face any six men an' lick 'em. I can be licked by any dozen an' not play the baby-act. I can fight the cops an' go to the Chair. But I'm a coward all the same—an' that's why I come here. Sit down!"

He pointed to a chair beside the table.

This was indeed a new Bill. Something told her that it was at last the real Bill, and the sheer force of that revelation of a new personality in a familiar body—the sense that she was to see a soul laid bare—conquered her as nothing else in the world could have conquered her. Nance sank into the chair and looked at him open-mouthed.

"Listen here," he said. "I seen two papers, an' I know what they're sayin' about me. But it's a lie. I was alone with Charley in his office next the poker-room—*you* know. Nobody

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heard what we said. I didn't put it up to him about his wife: he put it up to me, because he's stuck on another girl, an' he wanted to get rid of her—I mean his wife—an' wanted me to squeal about her an' me; an' I wouldn't stand for it. I told him he was a liar, an' he pulled a gun on me. I knowed he meant business, and I picked up the chair. Then some nice guy heard us an' must 'a' pulled open the door so's they all seen the finish —all the crowd in the poker-room. Charley'd dropped the gun when he seen the door open, but by then the chair was flyin' at him. It come down; I'd croaked him, an' I made my get-away."

She believed him.

"Self-defence," she said. "Why'd you run?"

"Habit. That was it—except I knowed that gang wouldn't 'a' listened to no argument. Run first an' tell 'em afterwards: that's the only t'ing when you got to do with a mob. But I wasn't afraid. I fought my way out."

Nance's breath came short. Her eyes shone.

"If—if they get you," she asked, "can't you tell 'em in court what you just told me?"

"A swell chance I'd have to be believed," laughed Bill. "You know they all got it in for me. An' nobody saw the start o' the fight or heard it."

"There was the gun on the floor."

"I couldn't prove he drew it first. Not a little bit. My record'll do for anyt'ing I got to say. I fixed my own feet this time—an' it's for keeps, too."

She was leaning across the table, her arms extended, her hands clasped. She forgot the old Bill, she saw only the likelihood of an injustice being done.

"You mean manslaughter?"

Again he laughed. "With all the cops layin' for me for years to get the goods on me, an' all that gang hatin' me an' ready to swear to anyt'ing? I mean the Chair!"

He was right; she knew that he was right. She got up and began to pace the room, a panther caged.

"They won't look here."

"Not right away. Not for a few days, maybe, Nance. But I can't stay shut up here forever."

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"An' you can't beat it out o' town?"

"I told you how that was."

"Not if you wait a day or two?"

"They'll keep watchin' for a week."

"Well—a week then?"

"An' then, before they'd quit watchin' the ferries an' the stations, they'd search the rooms of everybody I'd ever talked to—yes, an' this room, too. They'd guess by then that the way you'd hated me might 'a' been a bluff."

A last flame of the old hatred flickered in her face, but she smothered it. He had been right: she was sorry for him because he was the underdog.

"Then can't you get a room somewhere on the West Side? Nobody's on to you in the West Side," she advised.

"My picture's in every paper in town. By to-morrow there'll be a reward out. The only room I can get's in Sing Sing—an' I won't keep that long."

"Don't talk like that!" She stopped and looked across at him.

"It's straight," he said.

She tried to answer, but she knew that there was no answer to be made.

"Listen here," he said calmly: "I ain't t'rough yet. I want to tell you why I don't cut it short by givin' myself up. I want to tell you why I'm a coward." He stooped and rested his hands on the table. "Take a look at me, Nance," he said.

She looked: the hunted expression had passed from his face, but the old look that she had hated was not there; it, too, had passed, had fallen away as a mask might fall, and revealed something else, as the fallen mask reveals the real face. The matted hair hung low over the forehead, the square jaw was still pugnacious, and the misshapen nose was no better than it had been. Yet somehow the mouth drawn tight seemed another mouth to Nance, and in the deep-set eyes a new light burned.

"You know what I am," he said, "an' I guess I look it. I done about half the bad t'ings people says I done—an' most guys that people talk about don't do more'n a quarter. I might 'a' been some use, but I was wasted. I don't blame nobody.

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People wanted me to be somethin' I didn't want to be. They wouldn't let me be what I wanted, an' I wouldn't be what they wanted. So here I am. I don't believe I got much more sport out o' holdin' up guys an' knockin' 'em out than the guys had themselves. I sure didn't get rich at it. I been doin' a lot o' t'inkin' to-day. You can t'ink when you run away: if you know your runnin' ain't goin' to get you away, you got to t'ink. An' I doped it all out."

His eyes held hers. He went on:

"Them other girls never counted"—he dismissed their memory with a wave of his head—"nothin' never counted till I got stuck on you. I don't mean gettin' stuck on you made me any better. I was used to bein' what I was, I guess. It didn't make me better a little bit, an' it made me act like a fool to you. So you wouldn't have nothin' to do with me, an' I guess you was right. But somehow it got me t'inkin'. I knowed I'd got to end up like this sometime, all right, an' I wasn't afraid to die, but I didn't want *all* o' me to die. I didn't want to just go out like a match a fellow'd t'row in the gutter when the wind's blowed it out an' he ain't got a light. I got afraid o' that—terrible afraid I wouldn't leave the lighted cigarette behind me. Well, I didn't know quite for sure it was that till to-day; I didn't know it till I knowed for sure the match was certain to be put out an' put out quick."

Nance had no mind for the figurative. Her brows were contracted, yet she was breathing fast.

"What're you gettin' at?" she asked.

He bent nearer.

"This. Oh, I want it to be regular for you; I don't want nobody ever to t'row it up to you or—or it. You can go to City Hall, givin' my real name—the cops don't know that—an' you can get a preacher from the West Side Mission where they don't know me. You can do that to-morrow, an' then t'ree days from now, before they can get you in wrong by findin' me here, out I walks an' gives myself up to the police."

Nance had risen. Her color was high.

"You mean—you mean——"

"I mean you don't owe me nothin', an' so I t'ink you'll give

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me everyt'ing." He came around the table and stood close to her, but he did not touch her. "Inside a week I'll be caught, an' inside a couple o' months I'll be dead. I don't kick. It wasn't comin' to me for Charley, an' I ain't sorry for him a little bit, but I guess I deserve it on general principles, an' I won't mind—I wouldn't mind not at all if I t'ought I'd leave some o' my life behind me. I wouldn't mind dyin' if I left a life alive."

Nance had been looking at the table. Now she turned to Bill. Within her broad bosom something—not love for this man, but surely pity for him, and surely a deeper instinct and a greater passion than love—something that had for years fought within her strong body and demanded that body's completion, something that was love not for what was but for what was to be—shone in her face and made her beautiful. She did not open her arms to him; she did not speak; she put out her hand and gripped his.

Is there a chink in the high wall of the future through which men in the shadow of death, and only such men, may peer? Big Bill, at any rate, seems to have had a clearer vision than, had I been asked for an opinion, would at that time have been mine. A hurried City Hall clerk gave Nance a marriage-license in her own name and another name that I shall not reveal. A week later—against what protests and after what struggles I do not care to ask—Big Bill surrendered himself to the police at a station-house in the Bronx. Two months later, with a superb calm, he died in the Chair, and the papers said that he was a hardened criminal to the end.

And Nance? Well, I sha'n't tell you where Nance is living now. I shall tell you only that she has made her Great Adventure, that she has invested her ill-gotten gains in a small shop, is still a widow and is the most conventional and respectable of women. She spoke to me only the other day of her last attempt in her old business:

"The store-detective looked hard at me," she said, "an' no wonder: I had t'ree baby-dresses in my mink muff."

Little William is a sturdy lad and takes prizes at day-school and Sunday-School. I leave the riddle of little William to the Eugenists.

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ADVENTURES WHILE PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF BEAUTY

NICHOLAS VACHEL LINDSAY

I

I Start on my Walk

AS some of the readers of this account are aware, I took a walk last summer from my home town, Springfield, Illinois, across Illinois, Missouri, and Kansas, up and down Colorado and into New Mexico. One of the most vivid little episodes of the trip, that came after two months of walking, I would like to tell at this point. It was in Southern Colorado. It was early morning. Around the cliff, with a boom, a rattle and a bang appeared a gypsy wagon. On the front seat was a Romany, himself dressed inconspicuously, but with his woman more bedecked than Carmen. She wore the bangles and spangles of her Hindu progenitors. The woman began to shout at me, I could not distinguish just what. The two seemed to think this was the gayest morning the sun ever shone upon. They came faster and faster, then, suddenly, at the woman's suggestion, pulled up short. And she asked me with a fraternal, confidential air, " What you sellin', what you sellin', boy? "

If we had met on the first of June, when I had just started, she would have pretended to know all about me, she would have asked to tell my fortune. On the first of June I wore about the same costume I wear on the streets of Springfield. I was white as paper from two years of writing poetry indoors. Now, on the first of August I was sunburned a quarter of an inch deep. My costume, once so respectable, I had gradually transformed till it looked like that of a showman. I wore very yellow corduroys, a fancy sombrero and an oriflamme tie. So Mrs. Gypsy hailed me as a brother. She eyed my little worn-out oil-cloth pack. It was a delightful professional mystery to her.

I handed up a sample of what it contained—my *Gospel of*

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Beauty (a little one-page formula for making America lovelier), and my little booklet, *Rhymes to be Traded for Bread.*

The impatient horses went charging on. In an instant came more noises. Four more happy gypsy wagons passed. Each time the interview was repeated in identical language, and with the same stage business. The men were so silent and masterful-looking, the girls such brilliant, inquisitive cats! I never before saw anything so like high-class comic opera off the stage, and in fancy I still see it all:—those brown, braceleted arms still waving, and those provocative siren cries:—"What you sellin', boy? What you sellin'?"

I hope my Gospel did them good. Its essential principle is that one should not be a gypsy forever. He should return home. Having returned, he should plant the seeds of Art and of Beauty. He should tend them till they grow. There is something essentially humorous about a man walking rapidly away from his home town to tell all men they should go back to their birthplaces. It is still more humorous that when I finally did return home, it was sooner than I intended, all through a temporary loss of nerve. But once home I have taken my own advice to heart. I have addressed four mothers' clubs, one literary club, two missionary societies and one High School Debating Society upon the Gospel of Beauty. And the end is not yet. No, not by any means. As John Paul Jones once said, "I have not yet begun to fight."

I had set certain rules of travel, evolved and proved practicable in previous expeditions in the East and South. These rules had been published in various periodicals before my start. The home town newspapers, my puzzled but faithful friends in good times and in bad, went the magazines one better and added a rule or so. To promote the gala character of the occasion, a certain paper announced that I was to walk in a Roman toga with bare feet encased in sandals. Another added that I had travelled through most of the countries of Europe in this manner. It made delightful reading. Scores of mere acquaintances crossed the street to shake hands with me on the strength of it.

The actual rules were to have nothing to do with cities, railroads, money, baggage or fellow tramps. I was to begin to ask

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for dinner about a quarter of eleven and for supper, lodging and breakfast about a quarter of five. I was to be neat, truthful, civil and on the square. I was to preach the Gospel of Beauty. How did these rules work out?

The cities were easy to let alone. I passed quickly through Hannibal and Jefferson City. Then, straight West, it was nothing but villages and farms till the three main cities of Colorado. Then nothing but desert to Central New Mexico. I did not take the train till I reached Central New Mexico, nor did I write to Springfield for money till I quit the whole game at that point.

Such wages as I made I sent home, starting out broke again, first spending just enough for one day's recuperation out of each pile, and in the first case, rehabilitating my costume considerably. I always walked penniless. My baggage was practically nil. It was mainly printed matter, renewed by mail. Sometimes I carried reproductions of drawings of mine, *The Village Improvement Parade,* a series of picture-cartoons with many morals.

I pinned this on the farmers' walls, explaining the mottoes on the banners, and exhorting them to study it at their leisure. My little pack had a supply of the aforesaid *Rhymes to be Traded for Bread.* And it contained the following Gospel of Beauty:

THE GOSPEL OF BEAUTY

Being the new "creed of a beggar" by that vain and foolish mendicant Nicholas Vachel Lindsay, printed for his personal friends in his home village—Springfield, Illinois. It is his intention to carry this gospel across the country beginning June, 1912, returning in due time.

PROLOGUE

I come to you penniless and afoot, to bring a message. I am starting a new religious idea. The idea does not say "no" to any creed that you have heard. . . . After this, let the denomination to which you now belong be called in your heart "the church of beauty" or "the church of the open sky." . . . The church of beauty has two sides: the love of beauty and the love of God.

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II

THE NEW LOCALISM

The things most worth while are one's own hearth and neighborhood. We should make our own home and neighborhood the most democratic, the most beautiful and the holiest in the world. The children now growing up should become devout gardeners or architects or park architects or teachers of dancing in the Greek spirit or musicians or novelists or poets or story-writers or craftsmen or wood-carvers or dramatists or actors or singers. They should find their talent and nurse it industriously. They should believe in every possible application to art-theory of the thoughts of the Declaration of Independence and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. They should, if led by the spirit, wander over the whole nation in search of the secret of democratic beauty with their hearts at the same time filled to overflowing with the righteousness of God. Then they should come back to their own hearth and neighborhood and gather a little circle of their own sort of workers about them and strive to make the neighborhood and home more beautiful and democratic and holy with their special art. . . . They should labor in their little circle expecting neither reward nor honors. . . . In their darkest hours they should be made strong by the vision of a completely beautiful neighborhood and the passion for a completely democratic art. Their reason for living should be that joy in beauty which no wounds can take away, and that joy in the love of God which no crucifixion can end.

The kindly reader at this point clutches his brow and asks, "But why carry this paper around? Why, in Heaven's name, do it as a beggar? Why do it at all?"

Let me make haste to say that there has been as yet no accredited, accepted way for establishing Beauty in the heart of the average American. *Until such a way has been determined upon by a competent committee,* I must be pardoned for taking my own course and trying any experiment I please.

But I hope to justify the space occupied by this narrative, not by the essential seriousness of my intentions, nor the essential solemnity of my motley cloak, nor by the final failure or suc-

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cess of the trip, but by the things I unexpectedly ran into, as curious to me as to the gentle and sheltered reader. Of all that I saw the State of Kansas impressed me most, and the letters home I have chosen cover, for the most part, adventures there.

Kansas, the Ideal American Community! Kansas, nearer than any other to the kind of a land our fathers took for granted! Kansas, practically free from cities and industrialism, the real last refuge of the constitution, since it maintains the type of agricultural civilization the constitution had in mind! Kansas, State of tremendous crops and hardy, devout, natural men! Kansas of the historic Santa Fé Trail and the classic village of Emporia and the immortal editor of Emporia! Kansas, laid out in roads a mile apart, criss-crossing to make a great checkerboard, roads that go on and on past endless rich farms and big farm-houses, though there is not a village or railroad for miles! Kansas, the land of the real country gentlemen, Americans who work the soil and own the soil they work; State where the shabby tenant-dwelling scarce appears as yet! Kansas of the Chautauqua and the college student and the devout school-teacher! The dry State, the automobile State, the insurgent State! Kansas, that is ruled by the cross-roads church, and the church type of civilization! The Newest New England! State of more promise of permanent spiritual glory than Massachusetts in her brilliant youth!

Travellers who go through in cars with roofs know little of this State. Kansas is not Kansas till we march day after day, away from the sunrise, under the blistering noon sky, on, on over a straight west-going road toward the sunset. Then we begin to have our spirits stirred by the sight of the tremendous clouds looming over the most interminable plain that ever expanded and made glorious the heart of Man.

I have walked in eastern Kansas where the hedged fields and the orchards and gardens reminded one of the picturesque sections of Indiana, of antique and settled Ohio. Later I have mounted a little hill on what was otherwise a level and seemingly uninhabited universe, and traced, away to the left, the creeping Arkansas, its course marked by the cottonwoods, that became like tufts of grass on its far borders. All the rest of the

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world was treeless and riverless, yet green from the rain of yesterday, and patterned like a carpet with the shadows of the clouds. I have walked on and on across this unbroken prairie-sod where half-wild cattle grazed. Later I have marched between alfalfa fields where hovered the lavender haze of the fragrant blossom, and have heard the busy music of the gorging bumble bees. Later I have marched for days and days with wheat waving round me, yellow as the sun. Many's the night I have slept in the barn-lofts of Kansas with the wide loft-door rolled open and the inconsequential golden moon for my friend.

These selections from letters home tell how I came into Kansas and how I adventured there. The letters were written avowedly as a sort of diary of the trip, but their contents turned out to be something less than that, something more than that, and something rather different.

THURSDAY, MAY 30, 1912. In the blue grass by the side of the road. Somewhere west of Jacksonville, Illinois. Hot sun. Cool wind. Rabbits in the distance. Bumblebees near.

At five last evening I sighted my lodging for the night. It was the other side of a high worm fence. It was down in the hollow of a grove. It was the box of an old box-car, brought there somehow, without its wheels. It was far from a railroad. I said in my heart "Here is the appointed shelter." I was not mistaken.

As was subsequently revealed, it belonged to the old gentleman I spied through the window stemming gooseberries and singing: "John Brown's body." He puts the car top on wagon wheels and hauls it from grove to grove between Jacksonville and the east bank of the Mississippi. He carries a saw mill equipment along. He is clearing this wood for the owner, of all but its walnut trees. He lives in the box with his son and two assistants. He is cook, washerwoman and saw-mill boss. His wife died many years ago.

The old gentleman let me in with alacrity. He allowed me to stem gooseberries while he made a great supper for the boys. They soon came in. I was meanwhile assured that my name was going into the pot. My host looked like his old General Mc-

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Lellan. He was eloquent on the sins of preachers, dry voters and pension reformers. He was full of reminiscences of the string band at Sherman's headquarters, in which he learned to perfect himself on his wonderful fiddle. He said, "I can't play slow music. I've got to play dance tunes or die." He did not die. His son took a banjo from an old trunk and the two of them gave us every worth while tune on earth: *Money Musk, Hell's Broke Loose in Georgia, The Year of Jubilee, Sailor's Hornpipe, Baby on the Block, Lady on the Lake,* and *The Irish Washerwoman,* while I stemmed gooseberries, which they protested I did not need to do. Then I read my own unworthy verses to the romantic and violin-stirred company. And there was room for all of us to sleep in that one repentant and converted box-car.

FRIDAY, MAY 31, 1912. Half an hour after a dinner of crackers, cheese and raisins, provided at my solicitation by the grocer in the general store and post-office, Valley City, Illinois.

I have thought of a new way of stating my economic position. I belong to one of the leisure classes, that of the rhymers. In order to belong to any leisure class, one must be a thief or a beggar. On the whole I prefer to be a beggar, and, before each meal, receive from toiling man new permission to extend my holiday. The great business of that world that looms above the workshop and the furrow is to take things from people by some sort of taxation or tariff or special privilege. But I want to exercise my covetousness only in a retail way, open and above board, and when I take bread from a man's table I want to ask him for that particular piece of bread, as politely as I can.

But this does not absolutely fit my life. For yesterday I ate several things without permission, for instance, in mid-morning I devoured all the cherries a man can hold. They were hanging from heavy, breaking branches that came way over the stone wall into the road.

Another adventure. Early in the afternoon I found a brick farmhouse. It had a noble porch. There were marks of old-fashioned distinction in the trimmed hedges and flower-beds, and in the summer-houses. The side-yard and barn-lot were the

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cluckingest, buzzingest kind of places. There was not a human being in sight. I knocked and knocked on the doors. I wandered through all the sheds. I could look in through the unlocked screens and see every sign of present occupation. If I had chosen to enter I could have stolen the wash bowl or the baby-buggy or the baby's doll. The creamery was more tempting, with milk and butter and eggs, and freshly pulled taffy cut in squares. I took a little taffy. That is all I took, though the chickens were very social and I could have eloped with several of them. The roses and peonies and geraniums were entrancing, and there was not a watch dog anywhere. Everything seemed to say *"Enter in and possess!"*

I saw inside the last door where I knocked a crisp, sweet, simple dress on a chair. Ah ha, a sleeping beauty somewhere about!

I went away from that place.

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 1912. By the side of the road, somewhere in Illinois.

Last night I was dead tired. I hailed a man by the shed of a stationary engine. I asked him if I could sleep in the engine-shed all night, beginning right now. He said "Yes." But from five to six, he put me out of doors, on a pile of gunny sacks on the grass. There I slept while the ducks quacked in my ears, and the autos whizzed over the bridge three feet away. My host was a one-legged man. In about an hour he came poking me with that crutch and that peg of his. He said "Come, and let me tell your fortune! I have been studying your physiognifry while you were asleep!" So we sat on a log by the edge of the pond. He said: "I am the Seventh Son of a Seventh Son. They call me the duck-pond diviner. I forecast the weather for these parts. Every Sunday I have my corner for the week's weather in the paper here." Then he indulged in a good deal of the kind of talk one finds in the front of the almanac.

He was a little round man with a pair of round, dull eyes, and a dull, round face, with a two weeks' beard upon it. He squinted up his eyes now. He was deliberate. Switch engines were going by. He paused to hail the engineers. Here is a part

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of what he finally said: "You are a Child of Destiny." He hesitated, for he wanted to be sure of the next point. "You were born in the month of S-e-p-t-e-m-b-e-r. Your preference is for a business like clerking in a store. You are of a slow, *pigmatic* temperament, but I can see you are fastidious about your eating. You do not use tobacco. You are fond of sweets. You have been married twice. Your first wife died, and your second was divorced. You look like you would make a good spiritualist medium. If you don't let any black cats cross your track you will have good luck for the next three years."

He hit it right twice. I *am* a Child of Destiny and I *am* fond of sweets. When a prophet hits it right on essentials like that, who would be critical?

An old woman with a pipe in her mouth came down the railroad embankment looking for greens. He bawled at her "Git out of that." But on she came. When she was closer he said: "Them weeds is full of poison oak." She grunted, and kept working her way toward us, and with a belligerent swagger marched past us on into the engine-room, carrying a great mess of greens in her muddy hands.

There was scarcely space in that little shed for the engine, and it was sticking out in several places. Yet it dawned on me that this was the wife of my host, that they kept house with that engine for the principal article of furniture. Without a word of introduction or explanation she stood behind me and mumbled, "You need your supper, son. Come in."

There was actually a side-room in that little box, a side room with a cot and a cupboard as well. On the floor was what was once a rug. But it had had a long kitchen history. She dipped a little unwashed bowl into a larger unwashed bowl, with an unwashed thumb doing its whole duty. She handed me a fuzzy, unwashed spoon and said with a note of real kindness, "Eat your supper, young man." She patted me on the shoulder with a sticky hand. Then she stood, looking at me fixedly. The woman only had half her wits.

I suppose they kept that stew till it was used up, and then made another. I was a Child of Destiny, all right, and Destiny decreed I should eat. I sat there trying to think of things to

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say to make agreeable conversation, and postpone the inevitable. Finally I told her I wanted to be a little boy once more, and take my bowl and eat on the log by the pond in the presence of Nature.

She maintained that genial silence which indicates a motherly sympathy. I left her smoking and smiling there. And like a little child that knows not the folly of waste, I slyly fed my supper to the ducks.

At bedtime the old gentleman slept in his clothes on the cot in the kitchenette. He had the dog for a foot-warmer. There was a jar of yeast under the table. Every so often the old gentleman would call for the old lady to come and drive the ducks out, or they would get the board off the jar. Ever and anon the ducks had a taste before the avenger arrived.

On one side of the engine the old lady had piled gunny-sacks for my bed. That softened the cement-floor foundation. Then she insisted on adding that elegant rug from the kitchen, to protect me from the fuzz on the sacks. She herself slept on a pile of excelsior with a bit of canvas atop. She kept a cat just by her cheek to keep her warm, and I have no doubt the pretty brute whispered things in her ear. Tabby was the one aristocratic, magical touch:—one of these golden coon-cats.

The old lady's bed was on the floor, just around the corner from me, on the other side of the engine. That engine stretched its vast bulk between us. It was as the sword between the duke and the queen in the fairy story. But every so often, in response to the old gentleman's alarm, the queen would come climbing over my feet in order to get to the kitchen and drive out the ducks. From where I lay I could see through two doors to the night outside. I could watch the stealthy approach of the white and waddling marauders. Do not tell me a duck has no sense of humor. It was a great game of tag to them. It occurred as regularly as the half hours were reached. I could time the whole process by the ticking in my soul, while presumably asleep. And while waiting for them to come up I could see the pond and a star reflected in the pond, the star of my Destiny, no doubt. At last it began to rain. Despite considerations of fresh air, the door was shut, and soon everybody was asleep.

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The bed was not verminiferous. I dislike all jokes on such a theme, but in this case the issue must be met. It is the one thing the tramp wants to know about his bunk. That peril avoided, there is nothing to quarrel about. Despite all the grotesquerie of that night, I am grateful for a roof, and two gentle friends.

Poor things! Just like all the citizens of the twentieth century, petting and grooming machinery three times as smart as they are themselves. Such people should have engines to take care of them, instead of taking care of engines. There stood the sleek brute in its stall, absorbing all, giving nothing, pumping supplies only for its own caste;—water to be fed to other engines.

But seldom are keepers of engine-stables as unfortunate as these. The best they can get from the world is cruel laughter. Yet this woman, crippled in brain, her soul only half alive, this dull man, crippled in body, had God's gift of the liberal heart. If they are supremely absurd, so are all of us. We must include ourselves in the farce. These two, tottering through the dimness and vexation of our queer world, were willing the stranger should lean upon them. I say they had the good gift of the liberal heart. One thing was theirs to divide. That was a roof. They gave me my third and they helped me to hide from the rain. In the name of St. Francis I laid me down. May that saint of all saints be with them, and with all the gentle and innocent and weary and broken!

UPON RETURNING TO THE COUNTRY ROAD

Even the shrewd and bitter,
Gnarled by the old world's greed,
Cherished the stranger softly
Seeing his utter need.
Shelter and patient hearing,
These were their gifts to him,
To the minstrel grimly begging
As the sunset-fire grew dim.
The rich said "You are welcome."

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Yea, even the rich were good.
How strange that in their feasting
His songs were understood!
The doors of the poor were open,
The poor who had wandered too,
Who had slept with ne'er a roof-tree
Under the wind and dew.
The minds of the poor were open,
There dark mistrust was dead.
They loved his wizard stories,
They bought his rhymes with bread.

Those were his days of glory,
Of faith in his fellow-men.
Therefore, to-day the singer
Turns beggar once again.

[*To be continued*]

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BED CLOTHES

GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM

EGERTON walked into my private room on Saturday morning and flung a bundle of MS. on my table.

"Read that," he said.

I was irritated. Egerton is my junior partner—between us we constitute the publishing firm of Burdett Egerton—but I object to his breaking in on me when I am busy.

"What is it?" I asked.

"It's a story," he said; "a story which has been submitted to me for the magazine."

The Tower Magazine is one of our ventures and it is understood between us that Egerton is responsible for it. I resented his trying to make me do his work.

"Whom is it by?" I asked.

"I don't know. It's sent to me without name or address attached to it."

"Then for goodness' sake put it in the waste-paper basket and don't bother me."

"It's good," said Egerton. "It's so good that——"

"Then publish it; but for heaven's sake let me alone. I'm going down to the country for the week-end, and if I'm to catch my train I must——"

"Very well then, I'll publish it; but if there's a hideous row afterward, don't blame me."

Egerton is one of those men who pride themselves on freedom from conventional prejudice. If he thinks a thing is good from a literary point of view he does not care how bad it is in every other way. He rather likes shocking people. I have had to remonstrate with him more than once. His hint about the nature of the story that lay on my table frightened me. I publish *The Tower Magazine* with the object of making money and I am painfully aware that it does not do to shock the public.

"Very well," I said; "leave it there. I'll read it in the train and let you know on Monday what I think of it. But if it's the kind of story——"

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"It is," said Egerton. "Exactly that kind of story, only worse; but it's good. It's—I speak quite literally—infernally good. I wish I knew who wrote it."

I had promised to pay a Saturday to Monday visit to my uncle Ambrose in Cambridgeshire. I owe a little attention to the old gentleman in return for my education, which he paid for, and for his kindness in allowing me to consider his rectory my home. He is rather a big man among the local clergy, being a rural dean, a canon and having some reputation as a scholar. I am told that he is likely to be an archdeacon when the present man drops off. He has a very nice parish, a clean village inhabited, so far as I have ever seen, entirely by respectful old women who curtsy and small boys who sing in the choir. There is also a squire, but he is the black sheep of the flock and my uncle sees very little of him. The village is near Newmarket, and the squire is a racing man. When he is at home he has a houseful of fast people and seems particularly fond of fast women. None of his party ever go to church. My uncle is austerely clerical in his outlook upon life. I quite realize that he is bound to disapprove of the squire. I can also, I think, understand the squire's dislike of going to church.

I read Egerton's story in the train. It was all he said it was. Guy de Maupassant at his worst was not much worse; but, on the other hand, Guy de Maupassant was not much better. It was a fine, an uncommonly fine short story; but it was plainly impossible to publish it. I stuffed the MS. into the bottom of my bag and sat for the rest of the journey gloating over the abominable cleverness of the thing. It was an absolutely straightforward, simple piece of writing and the most sacred precepts of morality were remorselessly ridiculed. I felt, as Egerton did, that I should greatly like to know who wrote it. The man or the woman, whichever it was, had something very like actual genius.

On Sunday after morning service my uncle Ambrose took me for a stroll round his garden. He gave me his views on *The Tower Magazine* and I felt, as I listened to him, uncommonly glad that I had not left the story in Egerton's hands. If it had been published my uncle would never have spoken to me

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again. He already deplored the levity of the magazine and regretted its want of serious matter.

"Perhaps," he said, "I shall some day send you a paper myself. I have long felt that some attempt ought to be made to instruct our people in the history of the monastic orders."

This was an embarrassing suggestion. I owe a good deal to my uncle Ambrose, but I am running a magazine with the object of making money. And besides a paper on the monastic orders would not be fair to Egerton.

"Surely," I said, "your time must be too fully occupied to allow you to undertake such work. Your contemplated monograph on the English Benedictines, your cathedral sermons, your functions as a rural dean, the round of your parochial duties——"

"I have a curate. Mr. Metcalf takes a great deal of routine work off my hands."

I reached out gratefully toward a new subject, one less likely to prove dangerous to my magazine.

"I'm glad you've got a good curate. Is he all you could wish?"

Uncle Ambrose smiled. No curate is all that can be wished.

"Metcalf is a worthy fellow, hard working and strictly orthodox, a sound churchman; but a little dull. He is very far from being an intellectual companion. You will be able to judge for yourself when you hear him preach this evening."

I thought it very unlikely that I should hear the curate preach. I meant to go to church, of course. I should have no choice about that. But in my youth, when I lived with Uncle Ambrose, I acquired a faculty of abstracting my mind from sermons. I could now, I believe, carry on a complicated train of thought undisturbed if St. Chrysostom were thundering golden words in a pulpit close beside me. Nevertheless I did, very much to my surprise, hear that curate's sermon. At least I heard the latter part of it. At first I was fully occupied in going over in my mind the points of the story which lay at the bottom of my bag in the rectory. That story was not a good subject for Sunday meditation, especially in church. But I am glad I happened to

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be thinking of it, for if my mind had been occupied with anything else I might have missed an interesting sensation.

The curate had been meandering quietly along for about ten minutes and I sat enjoying my author's method of satirizing a particular moral platitude which he had put in the mouth of one of the characters in the story. Then I heard, actually heard with my ears, the very words which the character in the story had used. The curate said them. I sat up, awakened to consciousness by the extraordinary coincidence. A few minutes later Mr. Metcalf quoted another sentence out of the story, another of the moral truisms which the author had made to look so supremely contemptible. Of course the curate spoke in all good faith. Still, he used the very words spoken by the character in the story. This was more than a coincidence. I very nearly jumped out of my seat when this amazing curate concluded his sermon with the longest and most irritating of all the speeches of the fictitious character. He gave it out in tones of calm conviction, but he used once more the identical words of the story.

"I suppose," said my uncle Ambrose at supper, "that you must catch the early train to-morrow as usual."

"No," I said; "if I shan't be in your way I should like to stay till the afternoon. The fact is, I want to have a chat with your curate."

My uncle's eyebrows went up in mild surprise.

"With my curate! Do you know him?"

"No, I don't. But I knew a brother of his very well in college. We rowed in a boat together. The poor fellow is in London now. I fear he is going rapidly to the bad, drink, you know, and other things."

When I lie I always do so with such detail as will carry conviction. It would be the curate's business afterwards, not mine, to explain that fallen brother.

"Ah," said my uncle Ambrose; "sad, very sad. You're sure to find Metcalf in his lodgings about eleven o'clock. He takes the school at half past nine, and matins at ten. Then he has the Mother's Saving Club, which will occupy him about half an hour."

I found the Reverend Mr. Metcalf at half past eleven. He

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was writing when I entered. I noticed that he covered up his MS. with blotting paper as if he were afraid that I should read it. It may have been his next sermon. I chose to pretend that I thought it was something else.

"If that is another story, Mr. Metcalf," I said, "please give me the first perusal of it."

He grew quite white and looked at me with an expression of sheer terror in his face. For fully two minutes he did not speak. Then he blurted out:

"Who are you?"

"I am the owner of *The Tower Magazine*. I read a story you sent us lately, and I may say without flattery that it is a remarkably fine piece of work. But I'm not going to print it. It is—"

"I know," he said. "I know very well what it is. But how on earth did you know I wrote it?"

"Well," I said, "if you quote bits of it in your sermons——"

"Did I do that?"

"You did. Oh, don't look frightened. You didn't quote any of the bits I was afraid to print. You quoted, apparently in all good faith, the wretched moral platitudes which the story satirized."

"Good God!" he said. "I can't have done that."

"Yes, you did," I said mercilessly. "You used the exact words."

He stood for a minute with his back toward me leaning over the chimney piece. Then he turned and said:

"Listen to me. Those things which you call moral platitudes are truths. I believe them. I cling to them. They are the things I live by. They are sacred. But——"

"But you see the comic side of them."

"But," he said, without taking any notice of my remark, "I hear them every day of my life and all day long. I hear them from the canon. I hear them from the other clergy who come here constantly. I hear them from the old women in the village when they want things from me. I hear them from my own lips. I never—do you understand?—I never hear anything else. I believe them. But they get to be like bed clothes, like

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blankets and quilts laid over my mouth and nostrils. I'm smothered by them."

He gripped me by the arm and led me across the room to the window.

"Look out," he said; "what do you see?"

I saw the village post-office which was very nearly opposite the curate's lodgings. There were, I noticed, glass jars of sweets in the window, as well as notices about the hours of departure of the mail. Mr. Metcalf, using the eye of imagination, saw more. He succeeded in making me see the Cambridgeshire landscape.

"There it all is," he said. "Flat land, flat. There's nothing to break the frightful flatness of it except church spires, sticking up stiff into the air, spires and great foolish windmills. Look at the flat fields, the flat roads, the flat sky and those rigid pointed spires."

While he was speaking, a motor car rushed along the village street, a handsome car, one of the squire's, I suppose. In the tonneau sat a woman whom I recognized, Lady Crumlin. Her reputation, in several respects, had got beyond the stage of being doubtful; but she is a remarkably handsome woman and is always dressed as if she owned, instead of owing, a large fortune. Mr. Metcalf appeared to be getting somewhat hysterical over the scenery. I attempted to divert his attention from it.

"That," I said with a smile, "is one of the people whom my uncle particularly dislikes. It's a great pity they don't keep up the old fashion of going to church once a week in the country."

Once more the curate entirely ignored my remark. He had seen Lady Crumlin, but he was not thinking of her as a possible member of his congregation.

"Now and then," he said, "people come flashing along these roads. I get a glimpse at them. I don't know them. I don't speak to them. I don't see them at their races or their cards. But I fancy sometimes I can hear the men laugh or smell the scent off the women's clothes. It's just for a moment. Then I'm back with the flatness again. What you call the moral platitudes; with the clergy and their matins and evensong; their thin, sharp spires; and their gardens, with little laburnum trees

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in them, and rose bushes, and strawberry beds; and all the things they say, the quite true things they keep on saying every day. But they smother me. I kick and plunge to get air to breathe. That's how I came to write that story. I'm not a vicious man. I'm not a hypocrite."

"I don't profess to enter fully into your feelings," I said. "But I'm extremely interested. Go on plunging, by all means; but don't kick all the bed clothes off. Remember the decencies and leave a sheet. One sheet won't smother you. And send everything you write to us. It will do you good to get rid of it even if we can't print it."

I went back to London by the afternoon train and told Egerton about the Reverend Mr. Metcalf. He was greatly interested, and agreed with me that we should keep an eye on the curate with a view to securing something from him which it would be possible for us to publish. I promised to have a talk with him next time I paid a visit to my uncle. Unfortunately, most unfortunately as it turned out, I was not able to get away from the office for nearly two months. Then, when I was in a position to run down to Cambridgeshire for a couple of days, I heard that my uncle was ill. The doctor, who was evidently a man of some knowledge of human nature, said that the old gentleman had broken down from over-work, and ordered him abroad for six months' complete rest. I never myself met anyone who seemed to do less work than my reverend relative; but, of course, the mental strain of being a rural dean may very well be greater than I suppose. At all events my uncle went abroad and was evidently very well pleased both with himself and the doctor. I saw him when he was passing through London, and he was simply puffed up with pride and self importance. I did not grudge him his holiday in the least, but, being a busy man in my own way, I resented the way in which he insisted on regarding himself as a martyr to duty.

He stayed away, somewhere in northern Italy, for two months longer than the doctor ordered, and it was nearly a year before I visited him in his rectory again. I found a new curate in the parish and inquired what had happened to Mr. Metcalf.

"Metcalf," said my uncle, "behaved badly."

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He seemed disinclined to enter into particulars, but I was really anxious to hear about Metcalf.

"Did he," I suggested, "get mixed up with the squire and his lot when you weren't here to look after him?"

"No. Not that I heard of. When I say that he behaved badly, I mean toward me personally. He agreed, distinctly and definitely, though I did not have it in writing, to remain here and look after the parish while I was away. He left suddenly and without adequate reason almost immediately after I had gone abroad."

"Very inconsiderate," I said. "Where did he go to?"

"I never cared to inquire. If he had been offered a living there would have been some excuse for it. But there was nothing of the sort. He was too young a man to be promoted. Fortunately the bishop was extremely kind and secured the man I have at present."

"Do you ever hear from Metcalf?"

"No. He has not had the decency to write to me. Considering that I was exceeding kind to him,—I think, by the way, I met that brother of his in London on my way home."

"Brother?"

"Yes, the unfortunate young man of whom you spoke to me. I saw him in the Strand on the morning of my arrival. I don't think I could have been mistaken. The likeness was most striking."

I said nothing, because I could not for the moment recollect ever having heard of Metcalf's brother. Afterwards, when my uncle spoke again, the story of that poor fellow came back to me.

"Metcalf was scarcely straightforward about his brother," said my uncle. "I mentioned to him one day that I was glad to hear you were looking after the young fellow. Metcalf appeared to be embarrassed when he heard your name, but he denied flatly that he had a brother. I can quite understand a certain amount of reticence. The subject wasn't a pleasant one. Still I spoke in a most sympathetic way, and I expected, as between two clergymen, that he would have been more candid."

I recollected the brother then. I had myself called him

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into existence as an excuse for my visit to the original Metcalf. I became greatly interested.

"You're quite sure," I said, "that it was——"

"I did not speak to him," said my uncle. "He hurried past me, but the likeness was unmistakable. In fact, I should have thought it was Metcalf himself if I had not recollected what you told me about the brother. Have you seen him lately?"

"No. I have completely lost sight of him."

"Judging from his appearance," said my uncle, "I should say that he had sunk very low, very low indeed. There was every mark of dissipation about him."

"Poor fellow," I said, "he has kicked the bed clothes off in earnest then."

"The bed clothes?"

"It's a slang phrase," I said; "I dare say you never heard it. It means——"

"I can guess at the meaning, especially after seeing Metcalf's brother. You ought to try if you come across him to——"

"I shall," I said. "I'll do the best I can. I'll tell Egerton about him, and between us we'll try and get hold of him. We'll pull him together if we can."

I meant it, and I am sure that Egerton, with the recollection of that story in his mind, would have done his best. But neither he nor I have ever been able to hear of Metcalf. He has gone under altogether, I suppose. I often wonder whose fault it was. The squire and Lady Crumlin are perhaps to blame to some extent. My uncle Ambrose and the clergy of his rural deanery have a certain responsibility. My own conscience is not wholly clear. The landscape of Cambridgeshire and the church spires—poor Metcalf felt those spires greatly—have their share of the blame. But there may be something more. Ought the Christian religion to look hopelessly flat to a man? Ought it to affect him as an eiderdown quilt spread over his mouth?

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CONQUERORS

ALLAN UPDEGRAFF

THE Statute of Limitations, that very practical legal recognition of the fact that a man may outgrow his sins, saved Compton from criminal prosecution; but the papers published details enough to throw him open to prosecution of another sort. The immediate results were that Mrs. Madeleine Grant Compton, his wife, went to Lenox, Lawrence Price Compton, his son, hurried home from Europe, and he himself settled down to fight, eighteen hours out of the twenty-four, the hurricane that the news loosed against him and against his business.

On the whole, he enjoyed the situation. He was a born fighter, and the circumstance that, behind the attacks of his enemies of the Street and Clearing House, he had to face the outraged public sentiment of a nation, gave play to all the iron qualities that had made him powerful. Like Wellington, he formed his squares and allowed the successive charges to batter themselves to pieces. He did not even avail himself of offered proofs that half the bankers arrayed against him had been guilty of the same offence against the banking laws as the one proven against him. That would have hurt Credit, whose knight he had made himself, no less than his enemies. The simple fact was that they wanted to make him the "goat," the public was howling for a "goat": then let them come, one and all, and make and take him! At the end of ten days he gave up the hotel apartment he had used as a sort of temporary field-headquarters, and returned home. His bank was unshaken, his position was unshaken, his friends were unshaken. He had conquered.

It was a Thursday afternoon in early April. As he motored homeward with B. F. Twitchell, vice-president of an insurance company and his adviser in many a memorable war, he allowed himself to be almost gay.

"Great fight anyway, Benny!" he remarked while their car was held up in the crush at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second

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Street. "I was getting afraid I wouldn't have a chance to ring in on another."

"Sort of sword rusting on the wall—all that sort of thing?" suggested Twitchell. He was a slight, wiry man, with a trim little white moustache, sharp nasolabial lines, and a complexion like vellum. The rakish tilt of his soft gray hat emphasized a cheerfully sardonic quality in his face and manner.

"Well, it *does* make a man feel a little as if he'd been in a battle," said Compton.

"The only respectable battle-field left in the world," said Twitchell, with an expression that showed delight in his own mental activity, "is business. Modern warfare is ludicrous and disgusting; it needs its Cervantes. Judging by indications in the German magazines, Germany, the home of Don Quixote Wilhelm, may produce something good before long."

"I pass on that; but speaking of home—my next job is to make up with my family," said Compton. "The old lady had a tantrum because I wouldn't run away with her until the row blew over."

"Madeleine will come around all right," said Twitchell seriously. Three matrimonial failures had not destroyed his faith in his one ideal—womanhood.

"And Lawrence cabled: 'Expect me by first boat.' That was like Lawrence. I presume he thinks I've done nothing but expect him ever since."

"Lawrence is—a proposition."

"Oh, Lawrence is a good enough kid."

"And a good deal of a fool," said Twitchell.

"Oh, be broad-minded—be broad-minded!" returned Compton, chuckling. "Just because he backed you off the map a couple of times at your own favorite sport of hair-splitting—" He chuckled again, and touched the arm of his secretary who sat beside the driver. "Say, Harry, do you know whether Lawrence's got back?"

The young man turned respectfully. "Yes, sir, he has; he called up Tuesday afternoon, and twice yesterday; but you said that nobody, not even——"

"Sure—that's all right. I just wanted to know whether

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he'd arrived." He leaned back and smiled resignedly into Twitchell's acid countenance. "I suppose that means we're in for oratory before dinner, during dinner, and after dinner. Think we'd better go back downtown?"

"I can stand it if you can; he's *your* son," said the smaller man, and lit a cigar.

Compton chuckled and gave himself up to lethargic contemplation of the long, brilliant panel of sky that opened before them. Occasionally he puffed at a pipe, a heavy brown briar-and-amber affair of bulldog shape. His big head swayed a little to the motion of the car; the breeze made him pucker his widely-set blue eyes to slits—below which his vigils of the past week had left dark pouches. His broad, angular face, recently shaven, massaged, and powdered, was covered with wrinkles; but it had an effect of training, of hardness, that did not permit any of the wrinkles to go deep. The geniality of a double chin kept this hardness from seeming too prominent. He was a very human, if very keen and determined and powerful, old man.

The car coasted down a long slope, whirred a few blocks between the burgeoning green of Central Park and a wall of stone houses, turned down a side street, and stopped before a house numbered in the single-figure Wests. Jim Compton's home, like himself, did not obtrude: even though, also like himself, it could have stood comparison with more aristocratic company that had fallen to its lot. The white marble façade, over-decorated a little in the manner that was a reaction against the box-architecture of the first half of the last century, stood back dignifiedly from the sidewalk and looked down through a score of French windows on the quiet street.

Compton bustled up his front steps, his automobile duster flapping away from his portly front, and opened inner and outer doors with a latch-key. Except when Mrs. Compton's presence made other arrangements desirable, he seldom disturbed his servants.

"Is that you, Mr. Compton, sir?" called a woman's voice as he and Twitchell were hanging their outer things on the rack in the hall.

"It is that, ma'am!" said Compton.

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"I'm glad you're home, sir! I'll send Ford right up to see if you've any orders."

"You needn't mind; there's nothing but dinner for two, and I'll trust you to suit us," said Compton. He started down the hall. "Oh, say—Mrs. Ford?" he added.

There was a sound of hastening feet below. "Did you ring, sir? I'll send——"

"I just wanted to say that I'd forgotten—Mr. Lawrence. Better make it dinner for three."

"Please—Mr. Lawrence, when he left this morning, said he wouldn't be home for dinner."

"All right—for two, then. And you can have it as soon as you've a mind to. We're hungry—just home from the war!"

He took Twitchell's arm and passed down the hall to the room his wife called his den. "The kid's probably miffed because I wouldn't see him before," he explained, switching on the electric lights; "but I tell you I was too busy to attend my own funeral—until things broke right this morning!"

"You can make it a little grape-juice and seltzer," said Twitchell, "if you're going to buttle for us."

Compton busied himself over an oaken cellaret that stood in a far corner of the big, six-sided room. It was a nondescript place, a sort of combined office, study, and trophy-room, judging by the battered old roll-top desk at one side, the book-cases, the leather chairs, the mounted game-heads and stuffed fish on the walls. An electric radiator glowed on the hearth of the wide-mouthed stone fire-place. Twitchell backed up to the warmth. Compton took a wooden box the size of a shoe-box from the mantelpiece and sat down before him.

"Here's the stuff!" said the banker, working at the wooden cover: "this is what I wanted to show you. If this don't get 'em!"

He got the lid off and produced, from its nest of tissue-paper wrappings, a glittering instrument of feathers and mother-of-pearl and silver plating and fish-hooks. "How's that strike you?"

"Agate bearings, eh?" commented the smaller man, taking

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the thing and looking it over with the critical approval of an expert. "Pretty neat—not bad."

"Yes, sir!" Compton arose and they bent their heads together in grave consideration. "Made to my own order—everything. Show me a tarp with the nerve to give that the go-by!" He took the big fish-lure back into his own hands and dangled it in the light. "Think things'll be fixed so's you can leave by the middle of the month?"

"They can wait, if they're not," said Twitchell. "Business first, pleasure afterward."

The room's hall-door opened and a young man appeared on the threshold. He wore spectacles with tortoise-shell rims whose big, black circles gave his blue eyes a certain reserve, a certain wise importance. Above his large, round, inflexible forehead, his dark hair was brushed straight back in the Continental manner and a suggestion of pomade made it look something like a helmet. There was a blade-like neatness, polish and precision about his whole slim, trim person.

"Ford didn't tell me you weren't alone—" he began, and waited.

Compton, after a moment of surprised hesitation, hurried over to meet him. "Glad to see you, Lawrence!" he said, shaking hands. "Come in—glad to see you! You remember Mr. Twitchell, of course?"

The youth came into the room, bowed, and shook hands with Twitchell. Neither of them spoke. Compton surreptitiously replaced the tarpon-spinner on the mantelpiece and balanced himself on his heels.

"We expected to find you here," he said, eyeing his son with somewhat admiring, somewhat doubtful, friendliness. "Have a good trip over? By the way, I hope you told Ford you'd be here to dinner? I only mentioned dinner for two—after Mrs. Ford had told me——"

"I'm sorry; I shan't stay to dinner," said the young man; he spoke with carefully modulated distinctness, as if to keep any color of reproach from his words. "I was on my way downtown and merely stopped in for a moment on the chance that I might see you. In fact, a friend is waiting for me outside."

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"Can't you both stay? There won't be anything extra fine, you know, but——"

"If you've got any late sporting magazines in the library, Jim," interrupted Twitchell tersely, "maybe I could improve my time by looking up some additions to my kit."

He started for a side door. "Why, yes—sure," said Compton, hurrying after him. "There's a pile of them—I'll get them for you."

He returned in a moment and sat down in a chair beside the one his son had taken.

"Sorry I couldn't see you before," he said matter-of-factly. "The truth is, I've been about as busy as I ever was in my life. But you must have understood that?"

"And I find you—discussing fishing-tackle!" murmured the boy. "Some way that—staggered me. I can't quite get over it. It seems—I don't know how to express myself. At a time like this—fishing-tackle!"

"Oh, the row's all over now," said Compton, chatty but not as much at his ease as his words indicated. "I've licked 'em to a standstill. Twitchell and I expect to leave for a few weeks of tarpon-fishing about the middle of the month. What's unnatural in that? After work—recreation."

The boy looked intently at the glowing yellow tubes of the radiator. His face was pale, and the hand with which he smoothed his dark helmet of hair looked very white. He had the appearance of one who has just come from a hard struggle, saddened but victorious.

"I can't understand you—I suppose it's useless for us to try to understand one another," he said; "so I'll——"

"Oh, come!" protested Compton.

"But, of course, if there's anything on your mind—" he added, when Lawrence had answered his protest by a minute's silence.

"So I'll just say that I've decided not to finish at Jena," said the boy. "I've decided to come back and go to work. I can easily get an instructorship in Yale or Columbia, I think; and it will give me enough to live on."

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Compton thought over the matter a little while, becoming increasingly puzzled and irritated.

"Why the dev— why are you going to do that?" he demanded. "I thought you'd got your heart set on that Ph.D. What's got into you?"

"That's the part you won't understand; I'll just have to ask you to take it on trust that I—that— The simple fact is, father, that I've decided I can't spend any more of your money."

His clean, delicate face was twitched by a spasm of regret. Compton, watching him from beneath grimly lowered brows, seemed slowly to get a glimmering of the state of mind behind his son's declaration. His face lightened; he almost smiled.

"So you think my money's tainted, eh?" he asked.

"Don't put it like that—don't put it like that!" protested the boy, somewhat wildly. He got up and leaned against the mantelpiece, absorbed in his problem. "It means, among other things, that my demands—your desire to give me everything—may have had something to do— Oh, I can't explain myself when you wouldn't admit, even, that any wrong has been done!"

"Maybe you're sort of going off half-cocked, son," suggested Compton, still smiling. "You're always so deadly serious, you know! I can as easily think of you taking a thing easy as—Jesus Christ! Say, looked at from the right angle, this whole business is nothing to get——"

"Please don't try to make light of it," said Lawrence, pacing the floor before the radiator. "Please remember that this is one of the most serious occasions in my life; and I think it's more or less serious for you, too, for I know you don't hold my—regard—as lightly as—your tone would indicate. I tell you I'm all torn up! When a man awakens to the fact that his own father—" He shut his teeth on the rest of the sentence.

"Well, what?" asked Compton.

"It isn't so much the fact that I was called the son of a thief to my face," said the boy, still walking, still absorbed in the perturbation of his own soul; "although, God knows, I didn't relish that——"

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"Who called you the son of a thief?" interrupted the old man, ominously casual.

"It really doesn't matter; that wasn't what——"

"Don't be a fool! Who called you that?"

"Raoul Anderson, nephew of Henderson Anderson, head of the Irving Trust which you——"

"And old Anderson's prospective heir! Drunken lout! I hope his lies—you didn't take them seriously?"

"I was forced to take the facts seriously."

"Now look here—what do you know about the facts?" Compton got to his feet, big, granite-faced, white-haired, full of outraged dignity. "A thief! This is the basis for that libel. I borrowed my bank's money on my own notes—see? And I returned every cent of the money, with interest. Legally, of course, that sort of a transaction is a crime; but I was in need—and the practice was fairly general. Did you know that that was the whole basis for all this—this tempest in a teapot?"

"I know that you risked the money, the savings, of thousands of people—to take away the money of other men! Suppose you'd found yourself unable to return that money that you got by—by illegal means? As Anderson found himself—with your assistance?"

Compton laughed shortly, and resumed his seat. "I can't talk finance with you, son," he said; "you simply wouldn't understand how— You simply wouldn't understand. I suppose you'd argue all around me if I tried to explain; but you simply wouldn't get me, see? I'm not saying I'm sorry you wouldn't, mind you!"

"A whole life spent," muttered the boy, "in taking money without giving any return!"

"Maybe I'm glad you wouldn't understand. Maybe I get you a whole lot better than you think—and maybe I'm proud of you for feeling like you do. Just the same, it's kind of funny, too!" He smiled.

"I don't think you'd find it funny if you really understood me," said the boy hopelessly. "I can't comprehend—I always looked up to you as the soul of honor. I had a sort of *feeling*

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of honor whenever I thought of you—as I once had whenever I thought of Napoleon. And now——"

"And if I don't seem much worried by your talk," resumed Compton, "it's because I know you'll understand me better after you've knocked about a bit. I get a sort of feeling from you, too: a clean, bright feeling—like a razor that's never been used. Wait till you've been honed up a few times—got a nick or two—been dropped in the bath-tub——"

"And I can see you're proud because you've won—because you've crushed these other men," said Lawrence. "You might be a general returned victorious——"

"My son, the only respectable battle-field left in the world," interrupted Compton, "is business. That's Twitchell's way of——"

"What rubbish! How about the battle-fields of disease, ignorance, poverty, Nature—the Panama Canal? The business swash-buckler—the financial pirate——"

"Need our Cervantes, eh?" put in Compton. "Ridiculous old Don Quixotes——"

"Besides, any man can crush another by unfair means," declared the boy coldly, almost impersonally, lost in the web of his ratiocination. "I've thought how easy it would have been for Raoul Anderson to shoot me if people hadn't caught his arm and taken his revolver——"

"Say—look here! Did he try——"

"Oh, he was quite crazy; he'd been drinking, I suppose. And if he'd shot me, I've thought afterward, he'd have won just about the same sort of victory as you have by——"

"Oh, cut it, son! Even if there was a grain of truth in your palaver, what's the use? ——You say that young degenerate tried to shoot you?"

"Yes; I met him in the lobby of the *Napoléon* while I was waiting in Cherbourg. But that isn't important: except as coming on top——"

Compton arose and patted the boy on the shoulder. "Just the same, that's been worrying you—that's what's got you so stirred up. You've been brooding over this thing until it looks about a hundred times as bad as it really is."

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"I wish I could think you were right. But you're wrong, father: I've had a struggle, an awakening, that has cost me——"

"Why, of course I'm right. Now you just stay to dinner with me——"

"No—thanks just as much:—no, I must go right away. That reminds me I left Harriet—Miss Reber—out in the taxi—I didn't expect——"

He held out his hand. Compton pressed it warmly, smiling like a man much relieved and yet desirous of being friendlier if he dared. They walked to the outer door together. "Look here, now," ventured the elder man, restraining his son's hand on the catch; "if you'll excuse the reference—how about funds? I don't s'pose you'll connect with that job until next fall?" He made scratching his chin an excuse for looking apologetic. "S'pose I *borrowed* enough money for your regular allowance? That wouldn't be tainted, eh—how about it?" He covered a wry smile with one hand.

Lawrence looked at the floor; his face was full of seriousness and distress.

"You'll forgive me if I don't feel able to accept that offer, father?" he begged. "Harriet and I have decided to use her money until I secure a position. You see, we intend—we expect to— It's really very strange; I don't suppose I would have found this—this great happiness but for the turmoil of the last two weeks. I had always thought of Harriet in a friendly but perfectly impersonal manner: something like a sister."

"Maybe this business has sort of waked you up," suggested Compton, his smile extending into wrinkles that included his eyes. "Congratulations! She's a fine girl? Well—well! And I've no doubt her money is as untainted as the morning dew!"

He began to chuckle; and then turned serious before the perplexed rebuke in his son's face.

"'Scuse me, boy!" he apologized. "It's awful nice, all of it: but somehow it strikes me as funny—I don't mean exactly funny, either. Just my way of looking at it."

"I hope we'll see you from time to time, father," said Lawrence. "I'm sorrier than I can say to have been forced to—to hurt you."

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"Don't let it worry you, my boy," said the elder man.

They shook hands again. Compton returned to his den and opened the door into the library.

"Coast's clear, Benny!" he called.

Twitchell marched out, one finger holding a place in a gaudy-covered sporting magazine.

"Just excuse me while I get Pinkerton's to look after that son of mine," said Compton. "It seems that young Anderson cub's been threatening him: you remember that crazy Raoul—who'd be in Matteawan if it wasn't for old Anderson's money! Larry makes light of it, but it's got him worried, and I don't blame him." He opened his desk, gave a number, and asked to be called. "The kid's changed a lot, Ben," he said; "I'm suspicious he's almost a man. He's going to start out on his own hook—and he's going to get married." He smiled and fingered the telephone cord. "To tell the truth, I was afraid he'd never take either of those jumps until he was kicked into 'em. He's waked up. I know the stuff when I see it. Hang me—he'll do!"

"Oh, blood will tell," said Twitchell, opening the sporting magazine at the place he had been holding.

"And he's got some good, stiff ideas; I'd like to see you and him get together again——"

"Just now," said Twitchell, "I'm interested in fishing-tackle. I've got an idea that'll knock the spots off yours: luminous paint on rubber instead of silver plating."

"Back up! I tell you that old plated spoon—" The telephone bell rang. "Just wait till I get the son fixed up," said Compton, taking down the receiver. He paused with the instrument half way to his ear: "What's that?"

"Back-fire or busted tire, I guess," said Twitchell, glancing up from his magazine. "Why, what— My God, man! What——"

They faced each other in petrified silence while the thin, flat voice in the receiver called half a dozen "Hellos" and demanded indignantly to know what was the matter.

"O-o-o-oh!" screamed a girl's voice, faint with its penetration of walls and doors: "he's shot—he's killed! O-o-o-o-oh!"

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THE HIDDEN PATH

KATHARINE METCALF ROOF

LEDYARD'S theory — the amazing theory he unfolded to me the night of Ula's death—laid at the time its spell upon my imagination. Even now I have not utterly exorcised it. Ledyard lives in the atmosphere of the improbable as the rest of us do in the usual. I would not attempt to characterize the nature of his beliefs, yet assuredly the event of that night as he interpreted it, seemed such as could only exist, in the fantasy of his own phrase, in a land where mythology is true. He had found such a place, he said, somewhere on the northern edge of Africa.

Ledyard is a biologist. But that classification does not at all cover the range of his interests and investigations. His study of life is in a spirit more mystical, more speculative, than that of the student of so-called exact science, yet the cast of his mind is essentially scientific. He has spent a good deal of time in the East and the Pacific islands. Men who do that sometimes acquire strange beliefs, and come, if not to accept the supernormal, at least to view such phenomena in a different light, to approach them as the Western mind does the latest discoveries in medicine and physical science. Ledyard speaks of these things with the dry calculated manner of the scientist, yet with a fire in his almost opaque eyes. Ledyard's general effect of blackness, eyes, hair, moustache — clothes, even — is like one of the queer beetles he was absorbed in when Richard first introduced him to me. Sometimes he suggests rococo images to my imagination. I can see him as some mediæval alchemist mixing strange compounds in a dim room full of shadows, or a Rosicrucian knight attending mystic rites in the centre of a mountain. He is one of the people who tempt me to believe in re-incarnation.

The night that he expounded his hypothesis to me in the dying firelight I seemed for the time to pass into some wider realm or higher plane of thought, and, as I have said, the thing he described seemed possible. His theory, so he told me, was

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related to the most ancient and primitive of tribal customs and beliefs. He assured me that the mystery of Ula's case, which so baffled the doctors, was explainable by a fact recently recognized by science, if they had also been in possession of that other hypothetical fact inferred and subsequently proved by Ledyard to his own satisfaction.

Ledyard had been present at Richard's first meeting with Ula. The museum of which Richard was curator had sent him to Korea to purchase some recently exhumed heathen images, if their value seemed to warrant it. He had started home by way of Australia and on the return trip the boat had stopped at some island port, and there he had discovered Ledyard upon one of his leisurely errands of cryptic research. That very afternoon Richard's fate was settled. They went for a walk, got caught in a shower and took refuge in some outbuildings, where they were observed and invited into the house by a European resident who sent out a native servant with messages and an umbrella. Their host, who was one of those wandering Englishmen that get stranded or spellbound in the East, and on Pacific islands, offered them tea in the palm-leaf veranda. There Richard met Ula, who was a guest of the Englishman's daughter. They learned little about her except that she had been born on the island and looked, Ledyard admitted, as if she had native blood.

We had heard of Richard's marriage at the English consulate in some obscure port of a South Pacific island. But we knew no details, so I plied Ledyard with questions. Richard is my cousin. We have not seen much of him since his university days, nevertheless he has a firm hold upon our affections. He is one of those reserved, conservative New Englanders who surprise people by suddenly doing something romantic, being subject to those extremes of emotion and conviction often characteristic of the Northern type. Even through the vehicle of Ledyard's scientifically dry phraseology I gathered that Richard was utterly infatuated with the girl.

"She is beautiful"; I inferred the most obvious explanation, and Ledyard assented: "In her way, no doubt." To my further probing he did not elucidate greatly: "Oh, brown

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and slim and silent, with great eyes that watch you." Then he added: "But there is nothing in the least furtive about her. She is as clear as — daylight."

Ledyard was not able to furnish any definite details about Ula's antecedents. All that was revealed when they had come to the matrimonial discussion was the fact that she had been brought up by a missionary and his wife. At the time Ledyard and Richard met her the kind woman who had taken her mother's place had just died, and Ula had so passionately mourned her loss that she had been invited to visit the young English girl for distraction. There, Ledyard remarked, she seemed to recover her spirits fully in a few days. "It did not seem to me that she was unfeeling"—Ledyard seemed interested to analyze that point—"only that she was—well—child-like."

Richard did not continue his homeward trip after his marriage, but sent home his Kwannon or Bodhisattva, or whatever it was, duly ticketed and labelled; gave up his curatorship at the museum, and simply stayed on for two years and a half, as Anglo-Saxons often do in those lotos-eating islands. Ledyard saw them again on his next errand across the Pacific a year or so later.

"Did Richie seem happy?" I asked him. Ledyard thought he seemed quite content sitting with her on the veranda of their little coral-built house among the cocoa palms listening to the sound of the sea. "Yet there seems no material for companionship there——"

I could see that Ledyard's queer interest lay not in the question of Richard's happiness or the dissecting of his emotions, but only in their implications concerning Ula, and that that interest itself was the furthest possible remove from the masculine and human. When I questioned him concerning the tastes and occupations of Richard's alien wife he told me, "Natural—as opposed to civilized." It was when I exclaimed, "What on earth will Richie do with that child of nature in Boston!" that Ledyard laughed as at some reminiscence and replied, "That is one of the elemental impossibilities."

"But don't imagine," he added, "that she doesn't know

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how to act in a drawing-room, although she is at times subject to lapses in the conventionalities." I discovered later what he meant by that, and I sometimes wondered afterwards if these occasional idiosyncrasies of Ula's had not had something to do with their long stay on the island, for even to a scholar like Richard with his inner resources, the life there must have become monotonous.

They had to come home at last for some affair of Richard's property. His father had died. They were only at their town house a few days. Richard seemed in a hurry to get to the country. Harriet, Richard's unmarried sister, was in possession of the Beacon Street house. Ledyard's description had suggested that there could be no natural sympathy between the two women, unless affection for Richard should constitute a bond, but I had not been prepared for the extreme antagonism Harriet developed toward her young sister-in-law. Harriet is one of those dried, bleached, bloodless-looking women who seem able to endure more than the young and vigorous. She gave one the feeling that she had lived all her life indoors behind shuttered windows. Everything about her was starved, stunted, withdrawn.

It was a warm October day that I called, but Harriet had the windows closed to keep out the dust. As soon as she had greeted me Ula threw up the window and opened the shutters, letting in a flood of sunlight in which she stood revealed a radiant vision, but poor Harriet sat blinking, her pale lips set in a tight line of resistance.

"Slim and brown with great eyes,"—that much of Ledyard's description fitted Ula. Yet I think my first impression was that it seemed inconceivable that anyone dressed so entirely like other women should look so different. She wore a rather clinging dress made in the prevailing mode and she had thrust a red flower in somewhere. She moved like a creature unhampered by clothes, yet there was nothing unduly scanty about her garments. Her eyes were set at a perceptible slant. Her lips were red and slightly parted; a child's lips unmoulded by restraint, yet unchildlike in that, despite their young unconsciousness, they seemed to invite kisses. She seemed a

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being framed to nature's ends, to love, to be loved, to live the free life in the open. I could not imagine her reading a book or wearing a conventional evening dress under the artificial light. She did look, as Ledyard had suggested, as if she had native blood, yet she always, like any Anglo-Saxon, spoke of the islanders as a race apart.

Ledyard had said that she could chatter their soft language like a native, but when I asked her to speak it for me she shook her head and smiled. I noticed a faint tinge of embarrassment in Richard's eyes. He had followed her into the room a moment later.

"Ula used to speak it with the natives," he said, "but she says since she has not used it that she has forgotten it. It is just a ridiculous string of vowels anyway—nothing to get hold. No wonder she has lost it."

Even so it seemed to me one's mind might reasonably be expected to hold the memory of it for three weeks. Yet as I glanced at Ula's face, so alert, so responsive, it seemed impossible to accuse it of lack of intelligence.

It was Harriet who dared to press upon Richard further inquiries concerning Ula's parents.

Upon the bareness of the facts she put her own interpretation. "Nothing more or less than a foundling, as nearly as I can find out," she said. "Richard doesn't know who her parents were. Very likely the missionary found her a little half-clothed brown thing under a palm tree." Harriet's soft, dry, parchment-like skin contracted in innumerables wrinkles of contempt and dislike. Her antagonism to Ula was probably the strongest emotion of her faded unlived life.

"A creature so utterly without dignity"—that is how Harriet put it in the more reserved statement of her first confidence on the subject. "At times really—almost—indelicate." She gave no instance of the last-named quality at the time, although it was divulged to me later. "We found her racing like a tomboy after a butterfly one day, and when she caught it she killed it with her hands with no more remorse than a cruel little boy. She wanted to set the wings in her hair, she said. Richard scolded her until she cried and threw the thing away," so

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Harriet recorded with unction, "and then, of course," she categorically supplied the conclusion, albeit with her virginal reluctance, "he kissed her, and then she ran off singing."

I went to spend the week-end with them soon after that. I felt that Richard seconded Ula's urgent invitation with some reluctance. Perhaps Harriet's disapproval had made him apprehensive of Ula's effect upon the rest of his conventional circle.

It seemed to me while I was with them that Richard watched Ula and contrived that I should see her as little alone as possible. I thought I noticed a certain restiveness about him—scarcely uncomfortable enough to be called tension—like one who would keep some secret, not a tragic or disgraceful secret, but rather some intimate affair that the outsider has no right to know.

At the end of those three golden October days spent outdoors I felt that Ula had revealed herself to me with utter youthful frankness. And when I got home again I was at a loss to account for that underlying sense of mystery that she had after all left with me. Although so simple and natural—possibly, I reflected, because of it—she was different from anyone I have ever known.

That first evening after dinner she settled herself on the floor against Richard's knee as he sat in his stern old grandfather's East India armchair. Her free affectionate movement toward him was as direct and unconscious as that of a child or an animal, yet it did not embarrass me as public manifestations of affection far more restrained have done, although it might have offended the abnormally inhibited sensibilities of a Harriet.

Richard rose after a moment to show me some photographs in another room. When we came back Ula lay asleep on the fur rug before the fire.

Richard flushed. "Don't wake her," I urged him instantly, "she is so beautiful." So he did not rouse her, but sat looking down at his sleeping wife with a very strange expression on his face, swiftly banished as he caught my eye. "She is such a child," he said, rather rushing into conversation, "that I sometimes wonder if she will ever grow up." I was startled at

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this confidence from Richard. It was his first and last. He never spoke to me of Ula again.

"Give her time," I said, "and responsibilities."

He shook his head. "I doubt if she will accept them. The other day I found her patting the bull in the pasture. He is so dangerous that Sargeant has been forbidden to let him out. She was quite unconcerned. 'He won't hurt *me*,' she said, when I scolded her."

"She is quite fearless, is she not?" I remarked. Richard defined a little further.

"So far as animals are concerned. She is afraid of fire and sometimes of people. Harriet," he smiled as he said it, "frightens her. And once when I spoke a little sternly to her she was terrified. But she is not afraid of any creature of the animal world, not even poisonous snakes. I can't make her understand why she should avoid them. She seems to be one of those people who have an influence over animals." I had thought Richard was going on to say more, but he stopped abruptly and changed the subject.

The next day we came upon her kneeling by the brook, staring into it with the intentness of a cat watching its prey. Then suddenly with a quick movement of her hands she lifted a trout dripping and flashing from the water. I turned to Richard exclaiming and caught again that strange look passing out of his eyes.

He was not unhappy about Ula, of that I was certain. But I felt that his feeling about her had undergone something more than the inevitable change that must come over the relation of two people with further acquaintance. Ula was never sentimental in her most ardent outbursts of affection—which, by the way, she never hesitated to indulge before others. They were like the emotional expression of a passionate child, intense yet evanescent. In a moment she would be off and away again. Yet I divined that while this elusiveness at first may conceivably have hurt yet fascinated and held Richard, in the end it must as surely have contained some element of disillusion. At least that is how I explained a certain aloofness that I felt in him as I saw them more together.

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The impression I received of Ula during that visit prepared me to receive without undue sense of shock the story Harriet unfolded the following week in broken sentences and with quivering features. To Harriet it was a revelation so awful that I was left to infer the precise fact, it passing beyond Harriet's strength to be explicit. It, the horror, had happened early one morning when Harriet was visiting them (she never went again). She had gone out before breakfast to gather botanical specimens and Richard, out for a morning walk, had joined her. They had come suddenly upon Ula standing in a pool of the little river in the woods. Yes, their own river, Harriet admitted, but where any man passing might have seen. . . . It had taken Harriet days, by her own account, to recover from the shock. She had gone back to town at once. Yet while she was relating it as one describing the action of a lunatic or a criminal, all I could see was the radiant vision of the slim, brown creature with the water dripping from her in the early morning light; and Ledyard's phrase returned to me about mythology coming true. So were goddesses and nymphs surprised in the golden age, and the beholder, fortuitous or audacious, transformed into a legend.

Richard had lectured her within Harriet's horrified hearing, as she retreated she had heard Ula promising, "Never again. Of course, *if you don't want me to,* Richard." I cannot attempt to convey the abysmal scandalized contempt of Harriet's suggested italics.

I can see the little episode of course, as it appears to civilized perceptions, yet I can understand, as Harriet congenitally could not, the nature of Ula's impulse, which was not born of the different code which permits the Japanese peasant such primitive simplicity of ablution, but was only the young child's pagan unconsciousness of the psychology of coverings.

Richard went in town often, eventually taking a room in some bachelor chambers. Perhaps it was hard for him to work at home. Ula's great eyes must have reproached him for the long hours spent over things she could not understand. Yet once when he went on a three weeks' trip to New York, Ledyard, who dropped in on them from a steamer, not knowing of

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Richard's absence, said she seemed utterly happy and content without him. He didn't think she missed him at all.

It seemed to me at the time that this was because Ula was young and happy. "She is never cross or depressed," I said. "Ordinarily, not," Ledyard conceded, "but, haven't you noticed that she is curiously restless and what you might call cross if dinner is late and she is hungry?" He mentioned it as if Ula were something under his microscope.

It was Harriet who, with the reluctance of a rusty door hinge forced to open, informed me that Ula was to have a baby. At first, concerned only with the thought of Ula, it seemed to me the right and natural thing that she should have a child to play with and to love. But when I thought of Richard with all his traditions of scholarship the father of a child with those soulless, brook-brown eyes, with possibly that curious lack of mental continuity and tenacity—for by that time it was impossible not to admit that fact about Ula—I too felt reluctant to face the explicit possibilities of the situation.

I went out to visit them not long after that. The baby was not expected for two months and Ula was well and radiant as always. Richard went off fishing one afternoon, leaving me alone with her. It was the first time I had seen her alone except outdoors, when we were doing something together in the way of sport or exercise. I remember she didn't talk much—but then she never did—but just sat with her clear, reddish-brown eyes—the eyes of a pagan wood creature—raised to mine and listened. Presently I heard the sound of horse's hoofs and looking out of my window saw her riding off without a saddle in her usual way. I remembered that Richard had forbidden her to ride at that time, but I knew that she had not disobeyed him, only forgotten.

The rest of the story is strange and it should be terrible. At first it seemed so, but now it has come to seem a natural fact, like the death of the wild things with the first frost and other recurring inevitable tragedies of nature. Looking back on it, it seems as if one must have always realized Ula's earth life as predestined to briefness. It was impossible to connect her with the idea of age or decay. Let me then present the

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facts simply and with as little of their painful side as possible.

Ula had an accident that afternoon. The mare shied, she was thrown, the baby was born prematurely and only lived a few hours. Ula mourned it passionately at first, refusing food. I can see her now lying there, her wood-brown eyes black with despair. Then mysteriously in a day or two it passed and she seemed to forget the very fact of the baby's existence. It was strange and I felt an echo of truth in Harriet's grim words, "Even a child does not forget so soon."

She remained weak after her experience and lay about on the veranda, pale and languid but not unhappy, except that she seemed somehow to mind the limitation of her natural activity. Richard, who certainly did not lack devotion in those days, had a specialist down from town, who when he arrived made a swift decision.

There was nothing the matter with Ula, he said, except that she was physically depleted. He advised the operation known as transfusion of blood. It was talked over hurriedly, yet thoughtfully and the operation decided upon at once. A nurse was secured within an hour by telephone and all preparations made. Richard, who was magnificently healthy, insisted that he should be the one to take the risk. Ledyard had run up from town, one of his unheralded appearances, and arrived while the operation was going on upstairs. I received him, explaining that a specialist had come down from town to see Ula; I had not got further than that when the doctor came into the room. I had not had—none of us had had—the slightest apprehension. The doctor had said there was no occasion for alarm, but as soon as I saw his face I knew, so impossible is it to mistake the bearer of the tidings of death.

"It came almost instantly," he told us in his brief explanation, "as if it had been the result of the operation, which was, of course, impossible." It was an extraordinary case, one without precedent, he assured us, in his experience. I caught an odd gleam in Ledyard's eye when he said that.

The doctor soon left. I learned that Richard was in his room with the door closed. The nurse said it was best to leave him undisturbed. So Ledyard and I were left alone beside the

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fire in the library. It was then that he disclosed his strange, his preposterous theory.

I had exclaimed upon the mystery of Ula's death and thought Ledyard absent-minded as he stood gazing into the embers, when he answered, "Not so strange. On the contrary, an extraordinary, a wonderful confirmation. If I had known the doctor was going to try it—but they would not have listened to me."

"Confirmation!" I exclaimed, horrified, even though I expected nothing from Ledyard but the impersonal attitude of the scientist.

"Did you never," Ledyard's eyes were those of the spectator in the dark looking into the lighted room while remaining himself unseen, "did you never notice anything different—incomplete, shall I say—soulless about Ula?"

"She was very fond of Richard," I put my plea forward as an opposing argument rather than an answer.

"Yes, in her way," Ledyard agreed. "But, surely, you perceived that her way itself was different. Perhaps it is all for the best," he went on, "it must some day have meant a tragedy of life—always greater than that of death—for poor Richard. But if I had known—" he broke off then and looked up at me. "You know it was the operation that did it."

"The operation? But why—how could it hurt her?" I faltered.

Ledyard turned his eyes upon me, his almost opaque eyes that seemed to have taken on the impassivity of the East. He spoke slowly and I recall every word he said.

"You remember that Mephistopheles wanted his bargain with Faust written in blood? 'Blood,' he declared, 'is a peculiar essence.' That idea of the bargain written in blood, the belief that there is some peculiar power in the fluid of life, is one of those old superstitions that is not pure fantasy. The occult scientists maintain that the ego is contained in the blood. This is an age when the fairy tales are coming true." So Ledyard touched here and there on the various aspects of his strange subject. "You know the old tribal custom of mixing

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blood and its significance—the *Bludbrüderschaft* oath that Siegfried swears with Gunther.—We cannot afford to dismiss lightly those old beliefs and legends. They are usually true, either as partial facts or symbols. Life travels along hidden paths. They will be clear enough when we know where they are leading. Out on the edge of Africa—" Ledyard seemed to have wandered from his subject, but I knew him better than to think he had—" is a place where after I had discovered some of its strangeness, I said to myself, mythology is true. There was a young Sicilian there, a beautiful creature who seemed as soulless as a wood god. An American girl one day in joke called him 'Fauna,' and he was furious. It seems—I discovered afterwards—that there are children there born with a sort of tail," Ledyard explained with his serene biological frankness. "They are called *fauna* by the natives. The boy thought he had been insulted. You know, I suppose, that among mystics, both in the East and the West, you will find the belief in elementals,—wood, water and air creatures, not ordinarily visible except to the initiate. Little Ula was tangible enough to us all; but if there are—suppose that there are—different grades of human beings, creatures at varying stages of evolution, possessed of different degrees of individuality—or rather individualization"—Ledyard broke off there and finished with characteristic elimination. "Have you ever heard of hæmolysis?" I shook my head. "Further confirmation by modern science of the knowledge of the mystics. Hæmolysis is one of the occult mysteries of the blood." Easily now in my imagination was Ledyard the alchemist and I his pupil in the dim room full of shadows.

"I suppose you know that the blood crystals differ in the human being and the animal. Those of the human being in some as yet incompletely understood way are more powerful. It is, therefore, perfectly safe to transfuse the blood of the inferior animal into man, human blood assimilates the different and lower element. But if you infuse the blood of man into the animal the result is—death."

A long and very strange silence fell between us. I was the first to speak.

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"Impossible," I murmured. "How could such a thing be——"

"Oh, *how*——" Ledyard repeated and smiled.

Instinctively I rose and pressed the electric light button. The room suddenly familiar again partially reassured me, then a spot of crimson on the floor caught my eye—a handful of scarlet tanager feathers that poor little Ula had gathered and left there. Then again Ledyard's theory seemed fantastically possible. I turned to find his impersonal eye upon me.

"If that is your strange belief," I cried, "what is her end? Has she died like the things of the wood and the air, the grass that is put in the oven? Had she no soul?"

"Oh, as to what we call the soul," Ledyard answered, "the ray of the divine light or essence—whatever it is, it is my belief, as I have said, that human beings possess it in different degrees. I don't believe that when my dog dies his trust and devotion simply go up in smoke. There is a spark from that dog soul that is potent, living about somewhere. And Ula, you must admit, was not as we are."

"But everything about her was beautiful," I recalled. And Ledyard finished, "As it is with all of nature's unspoiled creatures. It is man with his soul, as we call it, who has a hand in his own making or unmaking, whose results are not always beautiful."

In the daylight, free from the domination of Ledyard's personality, it seemed as incredible as a myth of folklore, believable perhaps to one who had come under the spell of some far strange land where, as Ledyard phrased it, mythology is true. And yet who can rashly assert or deny? For who knows what the future may further reveal of the workings of these unknown laws that are now mysteries?

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REVERIE

ZOË AKINS

AS I walked alone thro' the storm
A man and a woman passed by me;
She clung to his arm and he sheltered her
And looked down on her face.
She was young; he was young . . .
I was old . . .
I walked alone thro' the storm
Homeward at night;
But a mist rose up in the rain
And I saw in its fabric a vision—
A man and a woman—
You and I!
O my dear, O my dear,
Do you remember
How often we walked in a storm?
How we shivered, how we hastened,
And yet how we loved it?
We loved the wind and the rain in our faces;
I held your arm closely,—we laughed!
And the lonely look of the city street
Was a thing that we loved.
We felt so alone, so contented, so glad,
Just to be out in the storm together,—
But we shivered and laughed, and we hastened . . .
You must remember as I do
The fire that always awaited and welcomed us—
So bright and so warm!
It, too, made us glad
To be alone and together . . .
I lay curled on a rug on the hearth . . .
You read from a book . . .
And I chanted the poems we both loved . . .
You said words that were bitter and beautiful
One night when the poems were ended

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And my voice was shaken with sobs,—
You said it were better if both of us
Were dead . . .
You said . . . but your arms were about me
And in the dim light of the fire
The words died on your lips,
And your kiss was merciless . . . tender . . .
Love found us glad and bewildered and shaken—
Yet sad and afraid
By the firelight . . .
I walk alone thro' the storm
And I remember . . .

DEPARTURE

JOHN HALL WHEELOCK

THE twilight is starred,
The dawn has arisen;
Light breaks from the east
And Song from her prison.

Faint odors and sounds
The west-wind discloses
Of laughter and birds,
Of singing and roses.

It is time to be gone—
Day scatters the gloom;
But here at my side,
But still in the room,

Like the angel of life,
Too kind to depart,
You hang at my lips,
You hang at my heart!

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DERELICT *

D. H. Lawrence

So the weeks went on. Always alone, his soul oscillated, first on the side of death, then on the side of life, doggedly. The real agony was that he had nowhere to go, nothing to do, nothing to say, and *was* nothing himself. Sometimes he ran down the streets as if he were mad: sometimes he was mad; things weren't there, things were there. It made him pant. Sometimes he stood before the bar of the public-house where he had called for a drink. Everything suddenly stood back away from him. He saw the face of the barmaid, the gabbling drinkers, his own glass on the slopped, mahogany board, in the distance. There was something between him and them. He could not get into touch. He did not want them; he did not want his drink. Turning abruptly, he went out. On the threshold he stood and looked at the lighted street. But he was not of it or in it. Something separated him. Everything went on there below those lamps, shut away from him. He could not get at them. He felt he couldn't touch the lamp-posts, not if he reached. Where could he go? There was nowhere to go, neither back into the inn, nor forward anywhere. He felt stifled. There was nowhere for him. The stress grew inside him; he felt he should smash.

"I mustn't," he said; and, turning blindly, he went in and drank. Sometimes the drink did him good; sometimes it made him worse. He ran down the road. Forever restless, he went here, there, everywhere. He determined to work. But when he had made six strokes, he loathed the pencil violently, got up, and went away, hurried off to a club where he could play cards or billiards, to a place where he could flirt with a barmaid who was no more to him than the brass pump-handle she drew.

He was very thin and lantern-jawed. He dared not meet his own eyes in the mirror; he never looked at himself. He

* This remarkable sketch is taken from Mr. Lawrence's new novel, *Sons and Lovers* which will be published shortly.

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wanted to get away from himself, but there was nothing to get hold of. In despair he thought of Miriam. Perhaps—perhaps——?

Then, happening to go into the Unitarian Church one Sunday evening, when they stood up to sing the second hymn he saw her before him. The light glistened on her lower lip as she sang. She looked as if she had got something, at any rate: some hope in heaven, if not in earth. Her comfort and her life seemed in the after-world. A warm, strong feeling for her came up. She seemed to yearn, as she sang, for the mystery and comfort. He put his hope in her. He longed for the sermon to be over, to speak to her.

The throng carried her out just before him. He could nearly touch her. She did not know he was there. He saw the brown, humble nape of her neck under its black curls. He would leave himself to her. She was better and bigger than he. He would depend on her.

She went wandering, in her blind way, through the little throngs of people outside the church. She always looked so lost and out of place among people. He went forward and put his hand on her arm. She started violently. Her great brown eyes dilated in fear, then went questioning at the sight of him. He shrank slightly from her.

"I didn't know——" she faltered.

"Nor I," he said.

He looked away. His sudden, flaring hope sank again.

"What are you doing in town?" he asked.

"I'm staying at Cousin Anne's."

"For long?"

"No; only till to-morrow."

"Must you go straight home?"

She looked at him, then hid her face under her hat-brim.

"No," she said—"no; it's not necessary."

He turned away, and she went with him. They threaded through the throng of church-people. The organ was still sounding in St. Mary's. Dark figures came through the lighted doors; people were coming down the steps. The large colored windows glowed up in the night. The church was like a great

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lantern suspended. They went down Hollow Stone, and he took the car for the Bridges.

"You will just have supper with me," he said; "then I'll bring you back."

"Very well," she replied, low and husky.

They scarcely spoke while they were on the car. The Trent ran dark and full under the bridge. Away toward Colwich all was black night. He lived down Holme Road, on the naked edge of the town, facing across the river meadows toward Sneinton Hermitage and the steep scarp of Colwick Wood. The floods were out. The silent water and the darkness spread away on their left. Almost afraid, they hurried along by the houses.

Supper was laid. He swung the curtain over the window. There was a bowl of freesias and scarlet anemones on the table. She bent to them. Still touching them with her fingertips, she looked up at him, saying:

"Aren't they beautiful?"

"Yes," he said. "What will you drink—coffee?"

"I should like it," she said.

He went out to the kitchen.

Miriam took off her things and looked round. It was a bare, severe room. Her photo, Clara's, Annie's, were on the wall. She looked on the drawing-board to see what he was doing. There were only a few meaningless lines. She looked to see what books he was reading. Evidently just an ordinary novel. The letters in the rack she saw were from Annie, Arthur, and from some man or other she did not know. Everything he had touched, everything that was in the least personal to him, she examined with lingering absorption. He had been gone from her so long, she wanted to re-discover him, his position, what he was now. But there was not much in the room to help her. It only made her feel rather sad, it was so hard and comfortless.

She was curiously examining a sketch-book when he returned with the coffee.

"There's nothing new in it," he said, "and nothing very interesting."

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He put down the tray, and went to look over her shoulder. She turned the pages slowly, intent on examining everything.

"H'm!" he said, as she paused at a sketch. "I'd forgotten that. It's not bad, is it?"

"No," she said. "I don't quite understand it."

He took the book from her and went through it. Again he made a curious sound of surprise and pleasure.

"There's some not bad stuff in there," he said.

"Not at all bad," she answered gravely.

He felt again her interest in his work. Or was it for himself? Why was she always most interested in him as he appeared in his work?

They sat down to supper.

"By the way," he said, "didn't I hear something about your earning your own living?"

"Yes," she replied, bowing her dark head over her cup.

"And what of it?"

"I'm merely going to the farming college at Broughton for three months, and I shall probably be kept on as a teacher there."

"I say—that sounds all right for you! You always wanted to be independent."

"Yes."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"I only knew last week."

"But I heard a month ago," he said.

"Yes; but nothing was settled then."

"I should have thought," he said, "you'd have told me you were trying."

She ate her food in the deliberate, constrained way, almost as if she recoiled a little from doing anything so publicly, that he knew so well.

"I suppose you're glad," he said.

"Very glad."

"Yes—it will be something."

He was rather disappointed.

"I think it will be a great deal," she said, almost haughtily, resentfully.

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He laughed shortly.

"Why do you think it won't?" she asked.

"Oh, I don't think it won't be a great deal. Only you'll find earning your own living isn't everything."

"No," she said, swallowing with difficulty; "I don't suppose it is."

"I suppose work *can* be nearly everything to a man," he said, "though it isn't to me. But a woman only works with a part of herself. The real and vital part is covered up."

"But a man can give *all* himself to a work?" she asked.

"Yes, practically."

"And a woman only the unimportant part of herself?"

"That's it."

She looked up at him, and her eyes dilated with anger.

"Then," she said, "if it's true, it's a great shame."

"It is. But I don't know everything," he answered.

After supper they drew up to the fire. He swung her a chair facing him, and they sat down. She was wearing a dress of dark claret color, that suited her dark complexion and her large features. Still, the curls were fine and free, but her face was much older, the brown throat much thinner. She seemed old to him, older than Clara. Her bloom of youth had quickly gone. A sort of stiffness, almost of woodenness, had come upon her. She meditated a little while, then looked at him.

"And how are things with you?" she asked.

"About all right," he answered.

She looked at him, waiting.

"Nay," she said, very low.

Her brown, nervous hands were clasped over her knee. They had still the lack of confidence or repose, the almost hysterical look. He winced as he saw them. Then he laughed mirthlessly. She put her fingers between her lips. His slim, black, tortured body lay quite still in the chair. She suddenly took her finger from her mouth and looked at him.

"And have you broken off with Clara?"

"Yes."

His body lay like an abandoned thing, strewn in the chair.

"You know," she said, "I think we ought to be married."

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He opened his eyes for the first time since many months, and attended to her with respect.

"Why?" he said.

"See," she said, "how you waste yourself! You might be ill, you might die, and I never know—be no more then than if I had never known you."

"And if we married?" he asked.

"At any rate, I could prevent you wasting yourself and being a prey to other women—like—like Clara."

"A prey?" he repeated, smiling.

She bowed her head in silence. He lay feeling his despair come up again.

"I'm not sure," he said slowly, "that marriage would be much good."

"I only think of you," she replied.

"I know you do. But—you love me so much, you want to put me in your pocket. And I should die there smothered."

She bent her head, put her finger between her lips, while the bitterness surged up in her heart.

"And what will you do otherwise?" she asked.

"I don't know—go on, I suppose. Perhaps I shall soon go abroad."

The despairing doggedness in his tone made her go on her knees on the rug before the fire, very near to him. There she crouched as if she were crushed by something, and could not raise her head. His hands lay quite inert on the arms of his chair. She was aware of them. She felt that now he lay at her mercy. If she could rise, take him, put her arms round him, and say, "You are mine," then he would leave himself to her. But dare she? She could easily sacrifice herself. But dare she assert herself? She was aware of his dark-clothed, slender body, that seemed one stroke of life, sprawled in the chair close to her. But no; she dared not put her arms round it, take it up, and say, "It is mine, this body. Leave it to me." And she wanted to. It called to all her woman's instinct. But she crouched, and dared not. She was afraid he would not let her. She was afraid it was too much. It lay there, his body, abandoned. She knew she ought to take it up and claim it,

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and claim every right to it. But—could she do it? Her impotence before him, before the strong demand of some unknown thing in him, was her extremity. Her hand fluttered; she half lifted her head. Her eyes, shuddering, appealing, gone almost distracted, pleaded to him suddenly. His heart caught with pity. He took her hands, drew her to him, and comforted her.

"Will you have me, to marry me?" he said very low.

Oh, why did not he take her? Her very soul belonged to him. Why would he not take what was his? She had borne so long the cruelty of belonging to him and not being claimed by him. Now he was straining her again. It was too much for her. She drew back her head, held his face between her hands, and looked him in the eyes. No, he was hard. He wanted something else. She pleaded to him with all her love not to make it *her* choice. She could not cope with it, with him, she knew not with what. But it strained her till she felt she would break.

"Do you want it?" she asked, very gravely.

"Not much," he replied, with pain.

She turned her face aside; then, raising herself with dignity, she took his head to her bosom, and rocked him softly. She was not to have him, then! So she could comfort him. She put her fingers through his hair. For her, the anguished sweetness of self-sacrifice. For him, the hate and misery of another failure. He could not bear it—that breast which was warm and which cradled him without taking the burden of him. So much he wanted to rest on her that the feint of rest only tortured him. He drew away.

"And without marriage we can do nothing?" he asked.

His mouth was lifted from his teeth with pain. She put her little finger between her lips.

"No," she said, low and like the toll of a bell. "No, I think not."

It was the end then between them. She could not take him and relieve him of the responsibility of himself. She could only sacrifice herself to him—sacrifice herself every day, gladly. And that he did not want. He wanted her to hold him and say, with joy and authority: "Stop all this restlessness and

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beating against death. You are mine for a mate." She had not the strength. Or was it a mate she wanted? or did she want a Christ in him?

He felt, in leaving her, he was defrauding her of life. But he knew that, in staying, stifling the inner, desperate man, he was denying his own life. And he did not hope to give life to her by denying his own.

She sat very quiet. He lit a cigarette. The smoke went up from it, wavering. He was thinking of his mother, and had forgotten Miriam. She suddenly looked at him. Her bitterness came surging up. Her sacrifice, then, was useless. He lay there aloof, careless about her. Suddenly she saw again his lack of religion, his restless instability. He would destroy himself like a perverse child. Well, then, he would!

"I think I must go," she said softly.

By her tone he knew she was despising him. He rose quietly.

"I'll come along with you," he answered.

She stood before the mirror pinning on her hat. How bitter, how unutterably bitter, it made her that he rejected her sacrifice! Life ahead looked dead, as if the glow were gone out. She bowed her face over the flowers—the freesias so sweet and spring-like, the scarlet anemones, flaunting over the table. It was like him to have those flowers.

He moved about the room with a certain sureness of touch, swift and relentless and quiet. She knew she could not cope with him. He would escape like a weasel out of her hands. Yet without him her life would trail on lifeless. Brooding, she touched the flowers.

"Have them!" he said; and he took them out of the jar, dripping as they were, and went quickly into the kitchen. She waited for him, took the flowers, and they went out together, he talking, she feeling dead.

She was going from him now. In her misery she leaned against him as they sat on the car. He was unresponsive. Where would he go? What would be the end of him? She could not bear it, the vacant feeling where he should be. He was so foolish, so wasteful, never at peace with himself. And

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now where would he go? And what did he care that he wasted her? He had no religion; it was all for the moment's attraction that he cared, nothing else, nothing deeper. Well, she would wait and see how it turned out with him. When he had had enough he would give in and come to her.

He shook hands and left her at the door of her cousin's house. When he turned away he felt the last hold for him had gone. The town, as he sat upon the car, stretched away over the bay of railway, a level fume of lights. Beyond the town the country, little smouldering spots for more towns—the sea—the night—on and on! And he had no place in it! Whatever spot he stood on, there he stood alone. From his breast, from his mouth, sprang the endless space, and it was there behind him, everywhere. The people hurrying along the streets offered no obstruction to the void in which he found himself. They were small shadows whose footsteps and voices could be heard, but in each of them the same night, the same silence. He got off the car. In the country all was dead still. Little stars shone high up; little stars spread far away in the flood-waters, a firmament below. Everywhere the vastness and terror of the immense night which is roused and stirred for a brief while by the day, but which returns, and will remain at last eternal, holding everything in its silence and its living gloom. There was no Time, only Space. Who could say his mother had lived and did not live? She had been in one place, and was in another; that was all. And his soul could not leave her, wherever she was. Now she was gone abroad into the night, and he was with her still. They were together. But yet there was his body, his chest, that leaned against the stile, his hands on the wooden bar. They seemed something. Where was he? —one tiny upright speck of flesh, less than an ear of wheat lost in the field. He could not bear it. On every side the immense dark silence seemed pressing him, so tiny a spark, into extinction, and yet, almost nothing, he could not be extinct. Night, in which everything was lost, went reaching out, beyond stars and sun. Stars and sun, a few bright grains, went spinning round for terror, and holding each other in embrace, there in a darkness that outpassed them all, and left them tiny and daunted.

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So much, and himself, infinitesimal, at the core a nothingness, and yet not nothing.

"Mother!" he whimpered—"mother!"

She was the only thing that held him up, himself, amid all this. And she was gone, intermingled herself. He wanted her to touch him, have him alongside with her.

But no, he would not give in. Turning sharply, he walked toward the city's gold phosphorescence. His fists were shut, his mouth set fast. He would not take that direction, to the darkness, to follow her. He walked toward the faintly humming, glowing town, quickly.

A PRAYER FOR BEAUTY

WITTER BYNNER

GIVE her such beauty of body and mind
As the leaves of an aspen-tree
When they vary from silver to green in the wind,
And who shall be lovely as she?—
Then give her the favor of harking to love
As the heart of a wood to the call of a dove!—
And give her the beauty of following free
As a cloud in the sky or a wave in the sea!

Give her such purity vivid with light
As the wonder of passion can be,
Aware in the day and rapt in the night,
And none shall be lovely as she!—
O give her the glory a lover shall find
In the sharing of beauty of body and mind,
The paramount beauty of giving, that she
Shall immortally give it!—But give her to me!

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FIVE PROFILES

JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER

I

The Salvation Shouter

HE stood on the narrow, gray strip of beach, swinging his arms, and declaiming his puny and invincible faith against the stupendous spectacle of the slumbering sea. His voice, hoarse from shouting his arrogant creed against the faint and far sky, the sky tenderly and rosily blue like the water, mingled with the murmur of the swells lost without breaking on the sand. Above him on the esplanade the gay and indifferent crowd passed without a sign, without an intimation that the Saviour he proclaimed so confidently, so threateningly, had for them the slightest significance. Only, at intervals, some one paused to smile, superior, or to throw him a contemptuous and superstitious coin.

But still his challenge, his prophecy, continued to soar unabated above the whispering tide, the fall of illimited feet. He lifted his face, his face white and worn with passion, with disease, with want, he lifted his burning and weary gaze, to the prodigal and careless parade. He held, in a gesticulating hand, his battered cap, exposing its stained and ragged interior; and fretted the sand with gaping and insecure shoes.

Unaware of his dilapidated covering, of his betrayed and ruined frame, he shouted the tidings of redemption, of salvation, to a gluttonous and exuberant throng as heedless of him as they were of the sea, spread before them like a silk scarf; out of the mystery of which, out of the splendor and majesty, they had their being.

He stood lost in his service, isolated in his vision; a victim to the blind, the tyrannical impulses of an obscure and imperious destiny, an implacable destiny without certitude or rest, reaching forward into uncreated and timeless space. His loud and incoherent words, those symbols of men's self-delusion, of vain

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hope, of poignant longing, seemed suddenly to fill the universe, to echo from the dumb and empty heavens back to the dumb and empty hearts of the crowd.

II

In Black and White

In her gown of fine, black silk, her fichu of Venise point lace, she was rigidly erect. Her hair, at an age when such a thing was inconceivable naturally, was as black and glossy as the cut jet bracelets on her thin wrists; and, in the white, bony structure of her distinguished countenance, her eyes were hardly less ebon. She stood erect, with her narrow, elegant shoulders held in an undeviating line of pride, of the consciousness of race, of a deportment without concession to the merely convenient or comfortable.

There was, about her, an air of supreme aloofness from the vulgarer processes of living; her voice never rose from its pitch of gentle precision; it expressed neither surprise nor suffering nor relief; whatever emotions might reign behind that even exterior, they never escaped into the arena of public knowledge, they never colored the slightly disdainful detachment of that delicate utterance.

She exhibited always a resolute order, an inviolable neatness, that banished the loose ends of either opinions or garb. Her watch, enamelled in black, her pins incrusted with pearls that—like herself—had only taken a finer lustre, a rarer polish, from the contact of events and time; the sheer web of her diminutive handkerchief, bearing the faintest odor in the world of roses long ago crumbled into ineffable memories and scents; the pendents in the tenuous lobes of her bloodless and shapely ears—all held the stamp of her religion of high propriety, her tireless energy of soul.

Her banded, black hair, that, in spite of its obvious and meretricious origin, seemed entirely admirable and satisfactory, more than any other detail expressed her spirit, her creed. In its courageous subterfuge dwelt the will that the years had been powerless to dismay. Time, in its rude assault upon her person,

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had been repulsed; time, that destroys women so ruthlessly, that transmutes them from ringing, passionate gold to lead, to tin, to ignominious brass, had swept over her and withdrawn, leaving her erect and unshaken; moving graciously, without regret, in narrow, beaded slippers, from a world whose standard she had found a little low.

III

Flower of Satin

Marshalled by maternal sagacity to where the light fell full upon her bare, young shoulders and robust breast, she presented a moving and significant spectacle against the turkey-red carpet and porphyry columns of that expensive hostelry. Her dinner gown, a sheath of pale green satin, netted in a portentous design of silver lace, was confined by a vivid blue girdle that descended to her crimson and precarious slippers. A tinsel rose; abundant auburn hair crimped and pinned about her concealed ears; and a profusion of gems distributed wherever the generous plan of nature offered possibility, completed her appalling and complacent adornment.

She sat with her hands folded in her labyrinthian lap, rapt in smiling and sympathetic interest in that public and exotic drawing room; while a dimple trembled under the powder with which —apologetically—she had endeavored to hide the rude health, the vigorous blood, of her sturdy and honest countenance.

At her side her parent reposed, a massive bulk, relentlessly garbed in an amazing magenta. She breathed cautiously, respectfully, into a constrained yet prodigious girth; and, with a fragile fan in her cushioned and clumsy grasp, directed a futile current of air against the mantelling discomfort of her determined martrydom.

They had, patently, arrived at a desired and difficult eminence in their progress toward a social and glorious goal. Through the herculean toils, the grim battles, of an absent male, through honorable privations, faithful allegiance to a far and resplendent ideal, that courageous and common couple had carried their offspring to where, bare-breasted beneath the electroliers, she had

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equal part in the luxurious and idle show. And, smiling good-naturedly at the painted and cold faces of the women turned toward her in passing and hypercritical appraisement, her dimple trembled illusively under its ineffectual, powdered mask.

IV

Gentleman in a Shawl

At his back the light streamed from the opened door, between the Doric pillars of the portico, and outlined him in sharp relief against the sodden night. A thin rain fell from a formless mist on the faces uplifted from the street to meet his words; the rain fell sibilantly on the flaring torches that cast a lurid glow on the vague forms of the assemblage, isolating them portentously amid the shifting and indeterminate shadows, the unsubstantial dark; the rain plastered the gutters with dead leaves, liberating the odors of decaying vegetation, of mould.

He had appeared in response to the insistent applause of those who had elected him to the administration of their integrity, drawing a shawl about his shoulders, muffling their bent, nervous force, obscuring his severe and delicate outline. But, as he spoke, he raised his hand, and its attenuated fineness, showing transparently in the light from behind, its restrained and fragile dignity, was an exact epitome, a content and an expression of the man.

He spoke slowly, choosing his formal periods deliberately from a life-long habit of reticence, of an authority that had pronounced the supreme condemnation upon human error. And his words were those which, from the inception of men's souls, have been their illusion and despair, the incentives of their struggles and sacrifices, of their bitter or glorious ends. They were the words that have been falsified by false and lying hearts, the cunning words that have snared great individuals, sublime causes, the obedience of brutal and facile mobs.

But, as he repeated them—drily, without emotion—the words "service," and "freedom," and "rectitude"; as he repeated—austerely—the promise of his obligation to an impersonal and concrete ideal, he communicated a sense of some-

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thing resolute and incorruptible; of something that, amid the shadows, was yet not a shadow; of a light that, above the murky and shifting flames of momentary torches, burned white and constant and pure in space.

V

The Woman in the Landaulet

The glittering machine ran swiftly, in a subdued and audible harmony, over the level road, leaving on either hand the flowered greenery of April fields and orchards. The top was folded back, and the effulgent sun shone on the flashing silver rails, the enamelled woodwork, and waxy ivory fittings; it fell on the hybrid sulphur orchids in their carved glass vase; and on the woman seated among the ashen-blue cushions. A voluminous wrap, the color of crushed grapes, folded her slight body; and her hair, unexpectedly silver above the petulant and powdered bloom of her countenance, was caught under a rim of maroon straw and fabricated flowers.

She had stripped her gloves from her smooth, blanched arms, and rolled them into a ball; intent upon the pure light of the morning sparkling in hot prisms in the emeralds on her asthenic fingers. At her feet, on an ashen-blue mat, lay negligently a bag of soft gold mesh, its clasp intricately carved and set with colored gems.

On either hand, swiftly and silently, the countryside fell behind: men working in the fields, women bending in their doorways, seemed petrified into grotesque and absurd postures; they seemed to perpetuate, in their aspects of obvious struggle, of painful effort, an incomprehensible toil, a toil for a vulgar and stupid end. The machine whirled past children frozen by the way into little statues of fright and wonderous awe—little statues in stained and baggy garments, with arms raised and fixed in an attitude of greeting, of farewell.

The woman in the landaulet pressed her lips to the speaking tube, leaving on the ivory a trace of red, of red that was not blood, and the machine sped in faster flight, with a higher, shriller song. The fields and flashing streams reeled back into

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the morning; the eddies of perfume from the blossoming orchards, lingering in the pools of sunlight along the road, were rent in shreds, soiled with dust and the reek of petroleum.

Nearby the hedges were formless streams of inconsequential greenery; farther back the houses dipped and moved more sedately to the rear; but, in the distance, the withdrawn and impersonal hills moved not an inch, no, not with a quiver. And, gleefully, the woman waved her pointed hand, her hand like a white, poisonous flower sparkling with a green and wicked dew, in a derisive challenge to the fruitful fields, the sappy, black stems of the trees.

A CITY MORNING

EDITH WYATT

THE lucent air of this fresh, careless day
Breathes on the long-lined street, the passers-by,
The pebbly roof-tops and the corners brimmed
And bevelled with the silver morning light,
A breath unspeakable—cool, cool and still.
The calm touch of a sheer forgetfulness,
Eternity's forgetfulness, stirs in this hour,
Blows on the house-tops and the passers-by.
The market draymen, and the girl that lifts
Her window after her hard night of shame—
Blows cool and still as when from foaming seas
Rose Aphrodite in the virgin winds
More beautiful than hope or memory.
Spirit of life and death, clear-surging day
Blowing immortal down my gray-halled street
This crystal morning, give me but to drink
Of this great cup you hand me; but to hark
In silence to this sparkling chord; to know
Deeply this instant real and fathomless,
This mighty moment's splendor, cool and still.

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ANSELO LEE

Paul Kester

I

THE fresh wind blew in my face, the night pressed close about me. It was very dark. The pale crescent had gone down behind the western ridge, leaving a dim gray light above the horizon which served to throw into bolder relief the blackness of the star-lit sky. It was not late, but as the season was advanced the heavy darkness, cut here and there by cheerful gleams that came through curtained windows, gave a sense of lateness to the hour and a foreboding of the coming winter.

I was in search of my friends the Egyptians. Their camps for the most part lay to the west of the town beyond an iron bridge, under an elm by the river-side. Thither I had gone in the early evening only to find my many steps useless. No Egyptians were on the old camping ground.

When once one has set out to find the transient habitat of a family of Rom, having promised oneself a seat on the turf with the embers of the low smouldering camp-fire just a yard or two off to look into, with one's back to a tree, and one's friends all about one, one is not easily reconciled to disappointment! Therefore when I chanced to remember that the tents were sometimes set up under a single wide spreading elm in a little green lane over the river south of the town, I bent my steps toward this last hope.

Quitting the street where I had passed on under the maples from lamp-post to lamp-post, from flare into shadow, I made my way down the rough bed of the railway, stumbling over the ties and becoming involved in the switches till I came to the long bridge spanning the water. Here in the dimness I discerned a masculine form seated upon the high buttress, seemingly intent upon the flow of the water. Not knowing his mood —as how should I?—it was startling so to come upon him in the darkness. Perhaps guessing my thought as I paused, and pos-

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sessing the kindly spirit which prompts men sometimes to put others at ease, he rose from his seat, but without approaching, and said:

"It's a quiet place here."

"So it is," I replied, but little reassured, for the tone was non-committal and I could not make out his features in the shadowing gloom.

"Are you going across the bridge?" continued the voice.

"I am," I replied.

"I will go over with you."

"Very well," said I, moving away.

"Won't you wait for me?" asked the voice.

"You can follow."

"But I should like to go over with you!" persisted the voice.

"Are you drunk?" I demanded incautiously.

"No," the voice answered without hesitation.

"Then why can't you go over alone?"

"The flow of the water beneath the bridge in the night, and watching the ties when I can but half see them, makes my head dizzy."

"It will not make you dizzy if you count the ties as you walk," I suggested.

"You are afraid to have me go over with you!" said the man out of the darkness.

"I have no reason to be afraid of you if you fear to go over a bridge alone after nightfall."

"You needn't think I'm a coward!" quoth the voice with some indignation. "If I start to go over this bridge alone, I tell you I shall fall through it! If you won't let me walk with you I shall have to go round by the town and cross at the old covered bridge. You have no more reason to be afraid of me than I have to be afraid of you—I never saw you before!"

"You were here first," I demurred.

"I was waiting for some one to come along."

"Have you a match?" I asked.

"I have three," said the voice.

"One is sufficient," said I with dignity. "Light it and let

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me see your face, then I will tell you whether or not I will help you over the bridge."

A match scratched on the stone of the abutment, a spark flashed, two hands made a circle about it till it grew strong, then for an instant it was held up to light the face which belonged to the voice which had said, "It's a quiet place here," . . . then a gust of the freshening wind blew it out and we stood shrouded in darkness again.

In the instant I had caught a vague impression of a dark face of remarkable beauty—the face of a Gypsy.

"May I come with you?"

"Yes, pal—we will jal over together!"

"Romanychel!" exclaimed the Gypsy.

"Where are you camping?"

"Under the elm in the lane."

"I was just going over to see you."

"Since we are brothers give me your vast. I cannot walk across such a place in the dark—scarcely at any time; I am not dinnelo. . . . I am no fool, . . . but I cannot do it."

"Keep hold of my hand then," said I.

And indeed it was well he did, for twice he tripped on the ties before we were half over, and was near going through them the third time he stumbled.

While we were yet on the bridge we heard a train up the track and were forced to climb down among the great rafters off the ties as far from the rails as might be. There we waited while the flash of the headlight and the awesome thunder and roar of the train came upon us. The steel rails rang and trembled, the bridge jarred and shook, the black engine rushed crashing upon us, over us, past us—the heavy clang, clang, of the great freight cars rolled on and on, deadening the sound of the cattle crushed in their narrow pens. Then it all went away into the darkness and left us crouching there, stunned by the roar, until the stillness of the night time returned, and the red calaboose lamps died like reluctant sparks in the distance.

"Let us go on," I said, rising stiffly.

So we clambered back to the ties. When we felt the solid

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earth beneath our feet the Gypsy paused, and releasing my hand said earnestly:

"Brother, I do not know why it is, but I cannot stand on any high place without wishing to throw myself off; neither can I walk over such a bridge as this, though I have no doubt the young Gorgios often jump or dive from it into the water when they swim here in the summer. My people all know this—I wish they did not. You can now see the fire by the tents down in the lane."

"I see it, but it has grown so late that after all I'd better return to the town—I'll see you to-morrow perhaps."

"To the town, brother? Where is your camp?" the Gypsy asked in surprise.

"I live in a house," I answered regretfully.

"You are not of the Gorgios, brother?"

"I am of the Gorgios, pal."

"But you can rokker?"

"A little."

"I wish you were not of the Gorgios, brother."

"And why do you wish I were not of the Gorgios?"

"Because I do not like the Gorgios, brother—because the Gorgios are full of their evil deceit. Yet there are some good Gorgios, I suppose, . . . and perhaps you are one of them?" This was a question.

"I hope I am, pal, but I would not make too sure of it."

"I will not until I have seen your face in the firelight," he answered.

Then we went on in silence.

"How shall you jal back to the gav?" the Gypsy presently asked.

"Over the covered bridge at the foot of the Main Street."

"Then you can come by the camp, it is just here before us. It is nearly as short as to go round by the railroad."

"I will go by the camp then," I answered.

We went down the steep embankment from the track, climbed a rough fence, passed through some dusty high weeds, and came to the lane where the turf was thick, where the dew lay heavy, and where the camp was made under the spreading boughs of

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a huge elm tree. About the camp-fire lounged the Gypsies, in the changing shadows of the night and the flames.

II

"Is it you, Anselo?" asked a voice speaking Romany. "And why have you brought a galderly Gorgio here at this time of the night?"

I paused at the edge of the circle.

"Putch the rye to be dukkered!" cried one of the dark women who sat by the fire. "Ask the gentleman to have his fortune told!"

"Mandy'd chore tute for a pash lill in vonger," said one of the men. ["I'd rob you for half a dollar in money."]

"Mandy'd da tute pang lills in vonger if tute could do it," ["I'd give you five dollars in money if you could do it,"] I answered.

"Beng lell mandy, devil get me—if he isn't Romanychel! Sarishan!"

"Dordi! We are dinnelo!" cried out the witch who had wished to tell me a fortune.

"Oh, me dere Duvel—dovelo adoi? . . . Oh, Lord, who is there?" demanded a deep voice from a tent near at hand.

"Romanychel! Romanychel!" answered the Gypsies.

"Throw on some wood! Make up a good fire!" said my companion, whom the Gypsies called Anselo. "He is not Romany, but a Gorgio who lives in a house in the gav!"

"A Gorgio?" echoed the Gypsies.

"He's tacho Romany—don't talk to me! He opened his eyes in a tan like any proper Egyptian—don't be deceived by his lies! What's your lay, pal? Be sure if you live in a house you make the Gorgios pay for such pleasant company!" spoke in my defence he who but a moment before had expressed his readiness to take violent possession of whatever of value my pockets might hold.

"Oh, me dere Duvel!" again complained the deep voice from the tent. "Wel akai, Anselo, . . . come here!"

Then with much groaning, and many exclamations of

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"Dawdy! Oh, dear!" and "Me dere Duvel!" there issued from the tent a huge misshapen mass which, leaning upon Anselo for support, struggled forward to the circle of light and there paused to survey me while I, in my turn, surveyed the strange figure.

It was a woman . . . a woman of very great age and monstrous deformity, the sense of which was much increased by an excessive corpulence, a rare deformity among the Gypsies. Her head was placed far into her shoulders, which rose high above it; her stature was very short, while her arms were of more than usual length, so long, indeed, that they might have reached to the earth as she moved forward; her black curly hair showed no gray in the firelight as it fell unconfined upon either side of a long face of almost Ethiopian complexion, which was lighted by very bright eyes wherein lurked a most malevolent expression. A loose gown of dark crimson made even more startling the woman's appearance.

"Mrs. Lee!" I exclaimed, recognizing at once a famous character of whom I had heard many strange tales.

"Oh, me dere Duvel!" she groaned, as she stared at me balefully.

Suddenly, without any apparent premeditation, but with a wonderful vigor, one of her long arms extended itself, and seizing the Gypsy who lay nearest, she raised him up from the earth and set him upon his feet.

"Make room for the rye—would you keep the yog to yourselves? Do you begrudge him a place on the turf? Make room —or jal to your tans!"

With this effort she sank in a heap upon some blankets Anselo had spread near the fire, where, groaning again, she rocked uneasily to and fro.

I was about to speak, when a sign from Anselo kept me silent. All the Gypsies were standing.

As she rocked to and fro there came to my mind many strange stories I had heard of this woman; of her power over her people, of her lofty pretensions, of her passionate temper, of her endurance and physical strength, of her claim to the powers of divination and sorcery; above all of her ambition and pride.

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"I am breaking at last!" she muttered. "The pains in my bones tear me to pieces—it's an awful thing to suffer! Oh, me dere Duvel—an awful thing to suffer—I shall not last many years longer!"

Anselo leaned over her.

"Puro dye!" he said, which means old mother, or, as we would say, grandmother. "Puro dye, the air of the night is cold! The dampness comes up from the river—draw the blankets about you!"

"I do not fear it," she answered. "It has done me its worst, has the cold and the damp and many another bad thing for a body!"

She turned to me, ceasing her slow swaying.

"Sit down by the fire, rye—don't mind their ill manners. What should they know of a decent politeness who know nothing? Beshalay!"

"There is indeed a chill in the air," I replied, sitting down Gypsy fashion with my feet under me. "How long shall you keep to the droms, dye?"

"Till I travel the droms of the duro tem [the far country]. I have never slept in a house—I never shall sleep in one as long as I have a vardo or tan or a bit of coppo [blanket] to throw over the hedge."

"The frosts are heavy now in the mornings."

"So they are, my son, as they should be! When I can raise the flap of my tan at the dawn and feel the chill air on my face, and see the yellow sun rise across the white frosty fields, I know that I live, I breathe deep—I am strong as I was in my youth. What is the frost on the window pane to the cold frozen dew on the tan? It is near a century now since I roamed in the Highlands of Scotland gathering the heather when the hoar-frost was thickest, to lay it close to my cheek—for my blood was hot in those days and I loved the snow and the ice! But above all I loved the frost on the heather!"

She sat for a long time silent.

"I shall not travel to the Gulf when the winter comes. I will stay where the snow falls, for I was born in the north and

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I love not the warmth of the south. Anselo, we will stay in the north!"

"It is for you to say, dye," spoke one of the Gypsies. "But at your age the winter is hard to pass."

"At my age!" quoth Mrs. Lee, turning her baleful eyes on the speaker. "At my age! When my day comes I shall tell you! But it shall not come until my work is done—and my work is not done!"

We sat silent a while, watching the fire. It grew late, but until Mrs. Lee should go to her tent I felt constrained to remain where I was.

"Dawdy baw O shillero leste sos!" ["Oh, Lord, how cold it is!"] moaned Mrs. Lee. "The yog cannot warm me now—in my youth the cold could not chill! Dawdy! Dawdy!"

I knew that I might sit there for hours with only the sound of the crackling sticks on the fire, or the soft stirring wind in the leaves overhead, with now and again the low-spoken words in the old rich tongue that seemed as akin to the nature about us as the wind, or the heart of the fire. No one would move until Mrs. Lee should go to her tent.

"I will jaw to my tan," said Mrs. Lee, suddenly breaking the silence. "The rye will be naflo, indeed he will be sick if he sits longer upon the shillo chick [the cold ground]."

She raised herself by the aid of her long arms, and stood with her eyes intent on the fire.

"Go, Anselo, into the tan, and bring me a shawl to warm by the yog."

When he returned Mrs. Lee took the shawl and held it up before the fire to warm, as she said:

"Go now with the rye to the bridge over the river; it is dark and the path is not easy to find in the lane."

"Kushto ratti," I said.

"Kushto ratti, pal—mandy'll not chore tute to-night; I know you for tacho Romany. When you blows open a safe or murders a Justice, I'm the pal to take care of the luvver or to sneak you out of the country!"

"Bring us some Gorgios out of the gav to be rokkered—

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fortune telling is naflo akai [bad here]," called one of the women from the door of her tent.

"Kushto ratti, my son!" said Mrs. Lee. "And be sure that we have the pleasure of your company to-morrow! Go with the rye, Anselo!"

We passed down the lane through the heavy grass to the road. We then walked abreast. Neither spoke till the bridge was reached.

"Will you come over and have a glass of beer with me?" I asked.

"No, brother, I will have no beer to-night, but to-morrow I will drink with you. I do not like to cross over even this bridge. May I come to see you in your house in the gav, brother?"

"Come whenever you will, pal! To-morrow perhaps I will show you where my house is—kushto ratti!"

"Kushto ratti, brother!" said Anselo, holding out his hand. "I have seen your face in the firelight—I shall know you again."

III

The next day as I lay in my hammock at home watching the stray fleecy clouds floating slowly over the deep blue of the sky, I heard a Romany whistle, and up to my gate rode Anselo Lee.

"Sar shan," I said, as he leaped from his horse. "How did you learn where I lived?"

"It was easy enough, pal," he answered, tying his horse to the hitching post by the curb.

"But you did not know my name, brother!"

"Others did then, pal—we are not all alike in our ignorance!"

"However you came I am glad that you have come. Let us go into the house."

"Yes, brother, let us go into the house by all means. I have much curiosity to see the place where you live, if it be so that we shall meet with no others."

So I took Anselo within doors, where we sat, Gorgio fashion, as he called it, in chairs near an open window through which came the pleasant hum of the locusts and the sound of the beat-

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ing of iron in the distant foundries over the hill, and mingling with these the light, easy voices of children as they returned home, happy that school was over; and sitting so we spoke of many a thing of interest in the tents of the Gypsies, but little known or cared for by the house-dweller. At last Anselo rose.

"Why is it, brother," he asked, looking as he spoke curiously about the room, "Why is it that you tempt the wrath of God by shutting yourself up in a box like this? When I see a city where the houses are so crowded that there is no green thing about them, no room but for a few narrow windows where the sunlight can shine in, then I pity the poor people who live there, for I think they must die very young. Oh, you Gorgios—the God you worship is your house! Everything you have is made like it, or to fit into it, or because of it! I often think when I see your trains, with cars as like your houses as they can be made, I often think, brother, that it cannot be pleasant to the Boro Duvel who has taken such pains to make the shady lanes, with all the out-of-doors so beautiful, to have your people riding over it so fast on iron rails from one town to another, as though you thought the country a bad place full of fevers, and that you could not stop with safety until you came to some of your own handiwork!"

He stood leaning by the window as he spoke, watching me as though I were some curious animal who wore a very large uncomfortable shell unlike that worn by any other normal thing.

"Dordi!" he cried, abashed a little by my amusement. "The sun will soon be setting, I shall be late for my supper."

"Stay and have supper with me, pal?" I asked him.

But he would not.

"I am glad I came, brother," he said, as he stood by his horse. "I came for more reasons than one. I came to see what the house of the Gorgio is really like to those who live in it. I came to see if a rauni out of a ker could make shift to live in a tent like a Gypsy—I don't think she could! When I come again, brother, I will come but for the pleasure of passing the time with you. Kushto divvas!"

And so into the saddle and away at a brisk pace, riding beautifully as do all his people, went Anselo Lee. I wondered

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then why he had come to see if a lady out of a house could make shift to live in a tent like a Gypsy. I said to myself as I thought of this, "He has some reason."

Thus it chanced that I made the acquaintance of Anselo Lee.

IV

It is pleasant in the evening to go down through the town, to pause a moment on the old bridge, to watch the twilight glow deepen and die over the ripples, to lose the line of the willows in the dusk of the coming night; then to go on over the dusty stretch of the road into the green lane, to the tents of the Egyptians.

I never tired of watching Anselo's face as we sat by the yog. I never tired of hearing his low voice recounting the day's experience, horse-trading in the town, or telling some tale of his people, or a story of roadside adventure. Often he came to my gate, often we met in the town, but oftener in the evenings we met by the camp-fire under the elm in the lane.

One evening as we sat so, long after Mrs. Lee and the others had gone to their tents, Anselo broke the silence by saying:

"Brother, I will tell you a strange thing. You are listening, brother?"

"Yes, I am listening. Do you hear the whip-poor-will in the distance?"

"Aye, brother, I hear it—it is a pretty thing to hear in the night time. Often I lie awake listening to it when all the others are asleep. It brings many thoughts to my mind. I have heard it in the evenings down in the land where the winters are like the summer time."

"In Florida?"

"In Florida, brother."

"I did not know you had been there."

"There are many things that you do not know of my ways or the ways of my people, brother—though you know more than another."

He laid his hand upon mine.

"Some day I will tell you what befell me there in the south.

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I will not tell you now, pal—we are but strangers—you might laugh or think me a fool, which would hurt me. When we know each other better I will tell you. But it is of this thing that I think when I lie awake in the rardi listening to the whip-poor-wills, it is of this thing I think when I am horse-trading, it is of this thing I think when I look abroad over the country, it is of this one thing I think always—always . . . "

He raised his hand to his face for a moment, whether to shield his eyes from the dull glow of the fire or to hide some sign of emotion, I did not know.

"What was the strange story you had in your mind to tell me?" I asked, after a pause.

"I will tell you now," he said, letting his hand fall at his side, lowering his voice as he drew nearer to where I sat.

"The puro dye, my grandmother, sent one of the children into the gav with money this morning to buy her all that she might need to write with. After the child came back I went into the tan. It was a strange sight, brother; there sat my grandmother with the paper spread in her lap, the ink by her side, the pen in her hand, and after all she could not write! She had blotted some of the paper and had broken some of the pens in trying to do it, and there were tears of rage in her eyes as she sat looking at the things which the child had brought at her bidding but which she could not use. As I went into the tan she looked up and there was anger and shame in her face. 'I was never beaten before,' she said, 'but I am beaten now in my old age—therefore I curse the name of the Boro Duvel!' With that she broke up the pens and flung them away, and spilled the ink over the paper, and no one dared speak to her till her fury abated."

"It is strange," I said. "Surely Mrs. Lee knew I would gladly write for her."

"It is indeed strange, brother—the dye has her purposes, she is keeping something away from me! She can deceive all the others, but she cannot deceive me—I have grown up in her tan and I know her ways!"

"Mrs. Lee is very deep, Anselo!"

"Tatchipen, indeed she is very deep!"

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"There are none deeper?"

"None, brother."

"I must go back to the gav!" I said, rising. "I am keeping you from your bed."

"No, no—I should but lie awake."

"Listening to the whip-poor-wills, pal?"

"Yes." He rose too. "I shall hear them all night. I shall hear other sounds, other voices; and I am not dinnelo!"

He walked with me the length of the lane, then on to the bridge, where we paused.

"I will go no further," he said, in answer to my question. "I will stop on this side. But, brother, I would willingly cross over a burning bridge for one of my own people, or for anyone whom I loved—remember that of me, brother!" He held out his hand. "We are tatcho pals? After all, there may be some good in a Gorgio!"

"As there may be in a Romany chal!" I answered, as I took his hand.

V

"Brother," said Anselo, the next afternoon; "Brother, we are a strange people. To-day I had a letter from one of my cousins, Nat Young—not that he can write, for he cannot, but he can pay those who can write to write for him. Therefore my cousin writes me a letter. Now I cannot read very well myself!"

"Read!" quoth old Mrs. Lee, who sat by her tent door. "Read! No one of my blood ever could, save the lines of the hand, and the stars, and the face of a fool. Ha, the dinnelo Gorgios who must needs write down their thoughts lest they forget them! My people remember—we forget not the ways of Egypt—we are not like the Gorgios, neither my people nor me!"

I caught a look in Anselo's eye which brought to my mind Mrs. Lee's own efforts to acquire one of the arts of the Gorgios, but I held my peace, as all did whose words might be contrary to Mrs. Lee's pleasure.

"Read!" laughed Ben Ward, the Gypsy who had threatened

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to rob me the first night we met. "Read, indeed—can you, pal?"

Still laughing, he thrust out his hand to lay it upon Anselo's shoulder.

"Now I cannot read very well myself," Anselo slowly repeated. "Therefore I go to one who can read well enough—a horse-trader apray the gav, and he reads me my letter."

"Ha!" quoth Mrs. Lee. "Ha, he reads your letter, for you cannot read very well." She spoke roughly, but I thought I could detect uneasiness beneath her manner; her eyes, I saw, were ever watchful of Anselo's face.

"My letter is a good letter and it pleases me well. But why, pal, does my cousin ask me in his letter if my complexion is whiter? Why is it my cousin never writes to a Romany chal but he must ask if his complexion is growing whiter? Why is it that I ask the same question when I write to my cousin?"

"It is of no consequence why your cousin should ask a foolish question; it is of no more importance why you should ask him the same," Mrs. Lee said, staring balefully from one to the other. "I like not your cousin Nat Young—he has ways like a Gorgio."

"Now, aunt, Nat's a pal of mandy's!" protested Ben Ward.

"Then jaw to your pal!" cried Mrs. Lee, turning her dark glance upon him. "I like well to see a mush keep with those of his liking! I ask him not to stay from them! I do not beg him to stay—I say to him—Dordi! There is the drom—get your wagon and jaw!"

Mrs. Lee was fast working herself into a passion.

"But, dye—" began Ben Ward feebly.

"Hold your tongue, you fool!" his wife said, plucking his sleeve. "Let her alone, will you?" and then, to soothe Mrs. Lee's fury: "Don't pay any heed to him, aunt!"

"Heed!" muttered Mrs. Lee, rocking backward and forward. "I'll heed him! It is thus I am treated in my age by those I have saved from the gallows! I will not suffer it! Indeed, it is past my endurance!"

"Will you write me a letter to my cousin, pal?" Anselo

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asked, to break the uneasy silence which fell when Mrs. Lee ceased her mutterings.

"I will write for you to-night," I answered.

Mrs. Lee caught my words. A new line of thought seemed to open before her; then she stole a covert glance at my face.

"You will write a pretty letter, I know, rye!" she said.

And late in the evening, after I had written for Anselo to his cousin, she kept by the camp-fire conversing with me until near the time of my leaving; then, a moment offering when we were alone together, she leaned forward and whispered close to my ear:

"Indeed, you write in a manner much to my liking. Come to the camp to-morrow with your pen and paper, my son, and write me a nice pretty letter at my bidding, and set down the words I shall say. Speak not of this to Anselo, my grandson, or to any other—it is for your knowing and mine, and for no others' knowing and meddling!"

She paused awaiting my answer.

"I will come to-morrow, mother, and I will say nothing. I can hold my tongue."

"I had been a fool had I asked one to hold his tongue who could not! The stars are dim to-night, yet can I see by their place in the heavens, as I can also see by the look on your face, that I need not fear what is between us shall ever become common. It is seldom I ask a favor, my son, but I always repay those that are done me!"

She drew back as Anselo came from the tent, her dark face showing no sign of the words she had spoken, seeming as it had seemed the moment before he left us, like the face of one who looks so far into the future that the world about is lost to the vision.

VI

"My son," said Mrs. Lee the next day as I sat in her tent, "I wish you to write me a letter. I have asked you to do this as I cannot write for myself. I am much troubled, my son, as indeed I have reason to be!"

I had taken writing materials with me when I set out for the

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camp, therefore it needed but a moment for their adjustment until I could turn to the dye, pen in hand, saying:

"I am ready now, mother."

"I have sent Anselo into the gav to be out of the way," she began slowly. "For it is on his affairs that I wish you to write."

"I hope, mother, you will not ask me to write anything which will do Anselo harm?"

"You are dinnelo!" said Mrs. Lee, turning her baleful glance upon me. "Why should I harm my own grandson? Why should I work ill to my own flesh and blood, when there are the Gorgios always at hand to arouse me to anger? Dawdy—dawdy! Why will you hinder me? Why have you set out to thwart and perplex me? Oh, me dere Duvel—me dere Duvel!"

She sat on a sort of rough divan formed of many pillows heaped on rolls of blankets and bedding. She now arose with the aid of her long arms, and tottering toward me laid her hand heavily upon my shoulder.

"Write as I say—I will not be hindered! Anselo shall know in good time what is written. Write now!"

Her dark hand still lay upon my shoulder, a compelling influence, strong almost as the look in her eyes.

"I will write, Mrs. Lee—I was a fool to think you would wish me to put on the paper anything that I should not!"

"You were truly dinnelo. Had I but a Gorgio's education —which, praise God, I have not—nor have any of my people, being ruled by me; nor shall they ever have while my spirit lasts —had I, I repeat, but the education with which the Gorgios idle their time, I should need to ask favors of none!"

"Do not be angry, Mrs. Lee, have I not said I will write whatever you wish?"

She withdrew her hand from my shoulder and turned slowly back to her seat. I adjusted my little portfolio upon my knee, jarred the stubborn ink to the tip of the fountain pen, then waited her bidding.

"I will tell you the story, my son; you will understand better what I wish you to write when you hear it."

"As you please, mother."

"You have seen Anselo; you know him for a fine young man.

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Had he not been born with his good looks this trouble had never come upon him, his head would never have been turned about on his shoulders; he would have taken a wife from among his own people, a rinkeno Romany chie such as I know, and never have gone off after a Gorgio rauni to be made her sport and the laughing stock of her friends!"

"Is it so?" I exclaimed.

"It is, my son, it is! And you shall hear how such a shameful thing came to pass. In the winter we jaws to the gulf. Now in this last winter where should we jal but into Florida, where we had never been before, going for the most part to the city near the mouth of the boro doyav, the big river, where the camp was made on the leveys. But I, like a fool, I must needs be jalling to Florida, hearing that the rich Gorgios go there to be out of the cold, thinking to make more at the dukkering. Well was I punished for my covetous spirit; well was I to pay for wishing more when I already have too much for my peace—having more farms than my fingers, more horses and vans than any Egyptian can count!

"We pitched our tents near the great hotels of a winter resort. I go little abroad from my tan, but the word passes about that a famous witch would dukker the raunis. So the raunis come to my tent in the evening with the ryas, the swells, in their white clothes, gay with light laughter, leaving many a dollar.

"I could see that the raunis cast not a few glances at Anselo, coming again and again, I thought, only to see him. But Anselo paid no heed to them, going about his own business, leaving them to go about theirs, which they did, when they saw he was not to be won by their wiles.

"But it changed; there came one evening a fair girl with golden hair and white cheeks, with eyes like the southern sky when the moon shines. She came with some others, but such was the charm of her looks that I had eyes but for her, feeling a pity rise in my heart as I saw she was one who had come to the south to mend harm which was past all mending.

"She held out her palm, gaily laughing as she crossed mine with a gold piece.

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"'Shall I have luck?' she asked me, still laughing.

"I smiled, for I knew she would hear my words as a prisoner his sentence.

"'Ma pen lati tatchipen [Don't tell her the truth],' I heard Anselo's voice from behind me. 'The rinkeno rackli [The pretty girl]!'

"'What does he say?' asked the rauni, putting her slender hand to her lips to hide the cough which came lightly. 'Is he speaking in Gypsy?'

"She turned then to see him stretched out on the blankets with his eyes full upon hers. As she did so, I felt a quick beat of the pulse in the hand I was holding.

"'Pay no attention to him; he says it is a pleasant evening—and he does not speak Gypsy, as there is no such language, only thieves' cant, which is gibberish not fit for such pretty ears. The planets——'

"But she stopped me, still looking at Anselo as he lay with his head raised on his hand, to say sadly:

"'Is there no Gypsy language? I had believed that there was.'

"'None indeed, my dear—what would we do with a language? Are we better than others that we need two for our uses? The Gorgios speak not two languages, they are dinnelo. How then should Romanychel speak two?'

"'The Gorgios?' she asks quickly. 'Dinnelo? Romanychel? I never heard such words before!'

"'How should you, my dear? It is thieves' jargon not fit for a lady to hear.'

"'Don't believe what she tells you!' spoke up Anselo, as I had never heard him speak before. 'My grandmother will not tell you the truth. We talk in the Gypsy language among ourselves, or when strangers are by and we do not wish them to know what we say.'

"'What did your words mean—the first that you spoke?' asked the rauni.

"'I cannot tell you,' Anselo answered, now getting upon his feet, showing his fine manly figure. 'I should rather not tell you.'

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"'It is of no consequence,' said the girl, turning to me. 'Will you tell my fortune, please?'

"When the fortune was finished the young men who were with her were for returning to the hotel ere the chill of the night came up from the earth. However, the other raunis must be dukkered first, and when I had told all their fortunes it was so dark that Anselo went with them to the hotel, carrying a lantern to light the way, for the rauni would not go without it, fearing, she said, to step on a snake in the dark—but, thinks I, wishing to walk beside Anselo, if the truth were told.

"After that the young rauni came often to the camp, nor could I forbid her, as she brought her friends to be dukkered, leaving them with me in the tan while she went with Anselo to look at the horses that she might try which was best for a saddle. Then when she had bought a horse for her riding she would come by the camp every day that we might see it. She had bought Anselo's own gry, which before he would not part with, nor even allow another to mount, but which I think he would have given to her as a present if he had dared.

"Though there were many fine young Gorgios come down from the north to make up her court, it was easy to see that the rinkeno rackli cared more for Anselo than for them all. I do not think Anselo knew this at first—for, as you must see, Anselo is but a fool for all his fine face and fine figure! It might have passed by and have come to nothing had not Anselo's horse, the one she had bought for her riding, been of a high spirit. It chanced in this way:

"A month had gone now since she first came to the camp; so, knowing us well, she would often ride down by herself of a morning, galloping back to the boro ker [the big house] in time for her breakfast. One morning she came in a fine new habit of dark blue which became her white face and light yellow hair. I thought myself as I stood in the door of my tan that she was pretty to look on. But Anselo's horse being unused to women liked not the long skirt which trailed over his side, as I saw by his restless way and the turn of his eyes toward it.

"Anselo was not in his tent when she came. I think the gry missed him, for it whinnied, and, paying no heed to the

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rein, made through the tents toward the field where we shut up the grys over night. Try as she would, she could not turn the horse back.

"'Anselo! Anselo!' called the girl at last, seeing him coming.

"The sound of her voice only startled the gry. He shied and plunged forward, throwing her heavily back upon the ropes of my tan. A Romany chie could have kept her seat with no saddle under her well enough, but this Gorgio was no horsewoman—a poor thing without any spirit! There she lay across the ropes of my tan with her yellow hair fallen down all over her shoulders, her white face paler, her eyes closed, in a swoon.

"As Anselo lifted her in his arms I heard him speak her name under his breath; I saw, too, that he held her very close to his breast as he carried her into the tan and laid her upon my bed. Ha! and by this I knew that he loved her!

"He would let me do nothing, nor any other, bathing her white face himself with his hands, which seemed black as they lay on her pallid forehead.

"When she opened her eyes she looked not at me, nor about her, she looked only at him. I do not think it gave her any satisfaction when her people came from the boro ker to take her away, as they soon did—I having sent one of the men to tell them what had befallen.

"From that time came a great change upon Anselo. He went every day with his guitar to sit by her as she lay in her chair out on the lawn under the live oaks, for the fall which would have done one of my people no harm had made her naflo [sick] indeed, and had brought back the cough to her lips.

"He would sit there by her side, the chals told me, and play hour after hour for her pleasure, while the ryes and the raunis looked on from the broad porches. When she would tire of his playing, he would give the guitar into her hands and teach her to pick out the tunes with her slender frail fingers—teaching her also the words of a puro Romany gillie, an old Gypsy song.

"Then she must have him teach her to rokker. I liked not her learning my language! I do not think now there was need

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for my anger—she cared not for the words, but to hear his voice speak them!

"I said nothing, holding my peace till the chals I had sent to the gav told me the rauni had left her chair on the lawn, being ferreder kenaw [better now]; then when I heard this I said to myself it is time Anselo should return to his people and forget the white rauni.

"All through the divvus from morning to noon, from noon on to evening was this on my mind, therefore when Anselo, saying no word, rose up from his place where the supper was spread and taking his stadi, his hat, jawed to the gav—I took my staff, and though it is not easy for me now in my age to walk the length of the tan, I followed him into the gav, never losing sight of him till he went up the steps into the boro ker, where she was staying.

"Long windows opened upon the piazza; there were few lights, for the night was warm and the moon at its brightest. I stood in the shadow of some jessamine vines which covered an arbor—I still remember how heavily their fragrance lay on the air; I remember it well, for as I stood there waiting, for what I know not, I heard a voice singing which seemed to me to float on the soft wind as the scent of the yellow jessamine lay on the night. It was her voice. I knew it though I had not heard her sing. I knew it because no other voice was like hers, and because the song was a Romany gillie.

"It was just dark enough on the long porch for me to creep up near to the wide open window where the song came from. Sometimes the voice died. The moon had not risen far over the palm trees, its light still fell through the long windows under the porch. So I could see her sitting with the pale white light on her hair, her face half turned from the window, looking up in Anselo's face. Her hands moved slowly, making music like moonbeams, and I thought as I stood watching that they seemed like the moonbeams themselves as they moved in the shadows.

"Anselo was close at her side. Gladly would I have called to him to come out to me, had I not been overcome by a fear that came of my seeing the love in his face; for though my

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will is high, it is no greater than Anselo's, for all his quiet ways.

"As I stood undecided, not knowing what I should do, the girl stopped her singing, her face raised to his. Then Anselo, bending, kissed her upon the lips, calling her by her name, Gertrude, and, as she rose, catching her close to him in his strong arms. Even in the dim light I could see the look of surprise on her pale face, a look almost startled; then I saw the look change, and I know that her lips answered his kisses and would have answered his loving words had not another light than the moonlight flashed into the room as her friends came to seek her.

"In an instant Anselo had released her, but it was too late —her friends had seen the white lady in the arms of the Gypsy.

"'How dare you—how dare you!' the girl cried to Anselo, who stood dazed by the light and the laughter and the strange look on her face. 'How dare you!'

"At this I would have gone in to Anselo, for he seemed not to know where to look, until her words stung him; then he raised his head proudly, but gently, looking without flinching into her cold eyes, and said slowly, as his way is:

"'I don't care for these people—I want you to come and live in my tent as my wife. I love you—will you come?'

"Even then I saw her face flush with a flush that came not from shame. But she was a coward, a weak thing, and she turned from his look to the others.

"'He has insulted you!' cried one of the young men. 'Shall I throw him out of the window?'

"He laid his hand upon Anselo's shoulder, while the rauni Anselo loved turned with some of the women to go out of the room.

"'Gertrude!' Anselo called. 'My kamli [my love]!'

"She turned back at the sound of his voice—she would have run to him—I saw it all in her face. Ha—it was too late! I had entered the room through the long window. Seeing me she stood still.

"'Come, sir, leave the house!' said the mush who had laid his vast on Anselo's shoulder, pushing Anselo on toward the

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door. 'You do not know how to conduct yourself here—go back to your own people!'

"Now Anselo is as strong as the strongest, so when he seized the insolent mush by the collar ill would have happened had I not laid my hand on his arm, saying to him, speaking Romany, that he had best come with me and leave a bad business before it was worse. Hearing my voice he loosened his hold on the mush and following me we jalled out through the window, leaving the boro ker. Nor did he ask me how I had come, nor why; nor did he indeed once speak to me then, nor at any time since, of the matter. For a little way we talked together, then thinking it was best for him to take his own pace, I said so, and he strode on under the tall palmettoes into the hammock, where I could not see him for the turn in the drom and the heavy shadows.

"I had scarce left the gravelled paths of the boro ker, going slowly, leaning much on my staff, when I heard light steps coming quickly behind me and knew without turning that the girl had followed.

"'Where is he?' she asked, half sobbing, her breath coming hard from the haste she had made.

"Paying no heed I went on.

"'Where is he? Oh, tell me where he is—I must see him! I must!' she cried, standing before me.

"But I thrust her aside with my arm, and went on.

"She paused there for a little while, standing in the midst of the drom in the moonlight, thinking to turn back, thinking to come to me again. And so I left her standing alone there with her white hands covering her face, but not hiding her sobbing.

"'She is not used to suffering,' say I to myself. 'Let her learn what it is!'

"As I went on with the aid of my staff, it came into my mind that we must not wait for the morning to be moving, lest she should come or send to the tents, and Anselo fall into her wiles once again.

"Therefore we broke up the camp hastily in the moonlight. In a few hours we were well into the heart of the pine woods,

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jalling over the tracks toward the north, where the Big Dipper hung in the sky."

Mrs. Lee paused for breath.

"That is the story," she added; then, after a moment's silence: "You will not soon hear such another."

VII

"And the letter, dye?" I asked, remembering it, as the little portfolio slipped from my knee, bringing my thoughts up from the Florida pine woods to the camp in the lane under the sweeping boughs of the giant elm.

"Dear God!" cried Mrs. Lee. "I had forgot it!"

She rose and went to the door of the tent to call to a child playing under the vans, asking if Anselo were come from the gav. The child replying that he had not come, Mrs. Lee returned to her place, and continued:

"Some three weeks ago there came to me this letter, sent first to one of my farms, then sent by the farmer to me. It says in the letter how she came by the name of the gav. She asked some Egyptians who told her."

Mrs. Lee extended the letter.

"Am I to read it?"

"By all means, young man. I have heard it but once, for I cannot trust every Gorgio to read it, nor would I trust my own people if they could make it out. Let me hear it again."

I opened the letter with hesitation, seeing as I did so that it was addressed to Anselo. However, the compelling eye of Mrs. Lee was upon me, and though I hesitated, it was but for a moment.

"Read it aloud, my son," said Mrs. Lee, impatiently. "Read it aloud."

There were only a few lines, which ran thus:

"Dear Anselo,

"I have waited a long time to write this, for I did not know where I might send it to reach you until yesterday, when I met some Gypsies I had heard you speak of—your cousins the Boswells—who told me where to address it. I hope it may

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reach you soon, for I am not well. I shall never be well again unless you forgive me! If you will only send me a few words to say that you have pardoned me, I think I shall be happy again. I was so startled when they came into the room—I was so weak! I did not even follow you, but let Mrs. Lee turn me back! I never said then that I loved you, though I longed often to say it. I love you, Anselo! I loved you then—I still love you.

"Gertrude."

"Gertrude!"

It was Anselo's voice that echoed the name.

I looked up. He stood in the tent door before us, his face suffused with a wonderful light, his lips trembling, his hands extended.

"I have heard!" he cried. "Let me see it—I know I can read what she has written, as I could hear her voice if she called to me from a thousand miles! I can read it!"

As he spoke he drew a step nearer, his hands still extended.

"Give me the letter!" cried Mrs. Lee, snatching it from me.

She rose, drawing back to the furthermost corner of the tent away from Anselo, who stood mute for a moment, while many of the tribe, among them Ben Ward and his wife, came to peer in at the door. As she saw them, Mrs. Lee's eyes darkened and flashed.

"Ye are spies!" she cried, turning upon them with a fury that swept through the place like a storm. "Ye have listened and warned him—away to your tans!" and the sound of her voice was as the rolling of thunder.

The Wards, man and wife, with the others, lowered their eyes before her fierce gaze, but made no sign of leaving the tent door.

"Ha!" screamed Mrs. Lee, raising her voice and shaking her black hair over her face in her rage. "Will ye not heed and obey me—have you come to set my own grandson against me? Dear God!—is that your intention!"

"Why should you be angered when I ask you for what is my own?" Anselo said in a voice so quiet that Mrs. Lee's fury abated and faded before it. "Why should you speak so to your

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own people when they come to the door of your tan? Is it that you wish to keep a thing that is his from your grandson—that you wish to deceive and frighten your own people? Give me the letter. I will not ask how it came into your hands."

"I will not give you the letter," she said, in a voice as firm and quiet as his. "None of my blood shall be made the sport of a Gorgio. I have spoken."

As she said this Mrs. Lee tore the letter again and again, then crumpled the fragments close in her palm.

A murmur went up from the Gypsies.

As he saw Mrs. Lee tear the letter a look came into Anselo's eyes awful to see, but he said calmly enough:

"Now will you give it to me? I can mend it."

"I have spoken," quoth Mrs. Lee. "Nor shall this I have torn ever be mended."

Without warning she darted past Anselo, thrust away the crowd at the door, and ere anyone knew her purpose ran to where the fire smouldered, casting the fragments into the embers.

"They shall burn!" she cried defiantly, turning to Anselo and the Gypsies. "They shall be ashes! They are gone past all mending!"

Ere Anselo could reach her side, ere he could kneel by the fire, the flames caught the thin edges; even as he gathered them into his hands from the very heart of the coals they were ashes.

"Too late!" he cried fiercely; then turning to me, the ashes still in his hands, unheeding the pain, for the fire was not yet smothered entirely from them: "Tell me where she is? Where the letter was sent from? I am going to her."

I could not tell him, for the date, with the address, was at the end of the page, and I had read neither when Mrs. Lee had caught the letter out of my hands. This I told him.

"Be content," Mrs. Lee said, moving to Anselo's side. "Let her alone—she shall have no words of forgiveness! Is she not a Gorgio?"

"I am going to her," he repeated, taking a step from among us, a look of power on his dreamy face.

"Watch the horses!" Mrs. Lee cried, pointing to where a

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dozen grazed at a distance. "No wheel nor hoof of mine shall be lent to this business!"

"Mother!"

His look was reproachful.

"Turn back!" she cried, her voice rising wildly. "Turn back ere I bid you forever begone out of my tent and away from the side of my camp-fire!"

She followed him, clutching his coat. Gently enough he freed himself from the grasp of her trembling hands.

"Mother," he said, "I have set my face to the east. I shall find the rauni I love ere I turn west again. I go without wagon or gry, for you hold back from me what is my own. I do not reproach you, I only bid you farewell. Kushto bok, mother!" He held out his hands to her.

She paid no heed to the gesture. She had turned to the group by the fire.

"Stop him—dear God! are ye dumb? Don't you see he'll be jalling?"

In her fury she shook her clenched hand at the Gypsies.

"Keep back, pals," Anselo said to the men who advanced to do Mrs. Lee's bidding. "I am not to be stayed—I tell you I am going to her—give me room!"

As he spoke he moved slowly away down the lane, none following him.

"Ungrateful!" screamed Mrs. Lee, her face pale with wrath. "Ungrateful! You abandon your people for the Gorgios!—your ways for their ways! Go, then, from my camp, my eyes shall never see you again in my tent door! Go into the east if it pleases you. Me and mine go to the westward. Our ways lie apart. Go! I will try to forget you!"

She looked down the lane. He was gone.

"My Duvel, punish——"

"Aunt! Aunt!" screamed the women in terror.

"I cannot!" Her arm fell at her side; her face softened, her hands trembled.

"Look to her, wife!" cried Ben Ward.

And the Gypsies crowded close about Mrs. Lee, who had fallen.

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VIII

I did not venture to the Gypsy camp again, fearing I might not be welcome since Anselo was gone; though often after sunset I would go down through the town to stand on the old covered bridge, watching the last glow of the twilight die over the ripples of the water. Then I would look across, seeing the white tents dimly in the lane, the camp-fire throwing up its sparks when all else lost itself to view.

One evening as I stood so, with my coat drawn close, liking the warmth which kept the little chill away, watching the figures that passed me dimly in the dusk, Ben Ward stopped to speak with me.

"It's a pleasant evening," he said, leaning upon the old gray railing at my side. "But there's frost in the air. There will be ice glazed over the still water in the morning."

"How is Mrs. Lee?" I asked. "I hope she is well."

"Yes, she is well enough now. I thought for a day or two it was all up with her, but it wasn't. Lord! There's fire in the old lady yet."

"Any word from Anselo?" I asked, after a pause.

"None, pal; the camp's dull enough, too, without him. We'll be moving on to-morrow."

"Moving on?" I repeated. "Surely you are not going until he returns!"

"He will never return—at least, I don't think so, nor does Mrs. Lee. Why should we keep in one place? The grass is all gone and it's a good way to lead the horses to water. There's no more dukkering for the women in the town, and no more horse trading for the men. It's best to be moving."

"Which road shall you take?"

"The one to the west."

"And you break camp?"

"We'll be moving by ten in the morning."

The wavering bridge-lights stirred uneasily in the rising wind. The Gypsy shivered.

"I hate to think of Anselo when the wind blows cold," he said, looking down at the flow of the river. "If he falls in

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with any Romanys travelling his way, he'll be well enough, but it's too cold to sleep under a hedge these nights. He's a good boy, is Anselo—a staunch pal. Mandy'd give the best gry mandy has for a sight of him at my tent door. If you ever see him again, young man—and who knows what may chance in this world—you tell him what I said of the gry—and that's not for now only, but for always! If he should need the loan of some vonger he's welcome to it, but Lord! he's known me since he crawled down the tongue of his mother's van into my arms the first day I ever dicked leste, and that was before he could talk. Kushto bok, pal! I'm glad to have met you, you'll always be welcome in mandy's tent, and if any friend of yours—mind, I don't say who—ever needs a Romany pal to get a pot of luvver, no matter how it was come by, out of the tem—I'm the mush to help a rye like yourself without asking for half of the money. Kushto bok! Kushto ratti!"

And so with an iron grasp of his brawny hand, rough Ben Ward, with his good heart and queer ethics, was gone away under the wavering bridge-lights toward the camp of his people.

A little before ten the next morning wagon after wagon turned from the lane upon the highway that led to the bridge and the town; wagon after wagon until a dozen vans were in motion. Following them came some light covered carts to end the strange train. At the back of the vans horses were tied, while beneath them, their shaggy coats almost touching the swinging camp-kettles, stalked the voiceless dogs of the Gypsies.

On to the bridge, to rumble and creak slowly over its rafters, on into the town goes the train of the Egyptians, differing in no wise from that first caravan as it approached the gates of the City of Paris in times long agone. The swarthy women peer out at those who look strangely upon them, as their ancestors peered from their carts at the wondering people of Paris. The lookers-on do not cross themselves now as of old to ward off the evil eye of the witches, but the children draw back into doorways, and the mothers clasp closely their babies—for the Gypsies are passing.

Mrs. Lee's great van came first, leading the others, resplen-

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dent with its gildings, its mirrors, and carvings. The curtains were drawn close, but through them I thought I caught the flash of the pythoness-glance.

Up the principal street of the town to the square moves the vagabond train, then westward until the heavy dust hides it, and the last cart and last horse are gone.

IX

Dull and dead lay the autumn leaves. Over the pasture lands swept the cold winter winds, driving the cattle to huddle close under their shelter of thatch. Gone were all the Egyptians, as the girds were gone, over the hills to the south. The haws were luscious and black on the haw trees that grew by the roadside north of the town. I had gathered a handful and was plunging into the woods to make my way home by paths I had known since my boyhood, when I heard a step on the frozen road and, glancing back through the network of branches, saw a man turn from the highway to follow me into the forest.

"Sharshan!" a voice cried. "Have you forgotten me, pal?"

It was Anselo Lee, but a changed Anselo Lee. There was the same wonderful beauty, only a little worn, a little wilder; the same charm, only deepened a little.

"Well, Anselo?" I asked him.

"It's all over, pal; she is dead."

As he spoke he looked away, while the tears clustered thickly upon the long lashes, and the clasp of his hand tightened upon mine.

"Tell me of it if you can, brother; and let me know how you have come. Are you alone?"

"Alone, my brother. Let us walk on in silence a little, then I will tell you. I came but to tell you. It is strange to me, but since the night we met on the bridge south of the gav I have thought much of you, and since I have left the camp I have longed often for a sight of your face—longed to hear the sound of your voice. I cannot tell why it is, but so it is—and because of it I have come."

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The twilight of the woodlands was about us, deepening as the twilight of the day drew on; only the dried oak leaves shook above us in the wintry wind to echo those we rustled with our steps. On and on I led the way, never turning, conscious of his footfall close behind me; on and on until we left the darkening forest to see the amber glory fading from the western sky. Stretches of stubbly fields lay between us and the town, fields where the corn shocks stood like muffled sentinels upon the frozen ground. Over the fields we passed in silence, and so reached the straggling houses and the lighted streets, and my own door.

"When I left you and my people," Anselo began, "when I left you I went eastward. It was not long until I came upon some Gypsies who had seen the Boswells, not long until I found my cousins camped a hundred miles further eastward. My cousins would not at first tell me where they had seen the rauni, pretending they knew nothing of her, but when I reproached them and they saw I was not to be turned aside, they told me she lived in a town further eastward, the name of which they gave me.

"I went on then, thinking Mrs. Lee had sent them word to turn me back; fearing indeed that they had misled me. And so it was. For when I reached the gav I made inquiry and knew that I had been deceived; no one of the name I sought dwelt in the place. All day long I had gone from house to house questioning everyone whom I met, until I knew it was useless. Then the night came on."

"What did you do, brother?"

"What could I do?" He rose, and crossed to the window, looking out into the night, his breast heaving. "I stood there at the edge of the town, tricked and betrayed by my own people! Stood there and knew that she whom I was seeking was waiting for me, thinking perhaps that I was cruel and slow to forgive! Then I set my face to the west again, scarcely resting day or night till I came to the camp of my cousins the Boswells. The bells in the gav nearby were striking midnight when I stopped at the door of Seth Boswell's tent. As I counted the strokes I could hear his heavy breathing; then when the bells were done

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ringing, I put by the flaps and went in and knelt by his bed, wakening him from his sleep.

"'Who is it?' he asked, starting up.

"But I pushed him back on his pillow, holding him for all his struggles as I would have held a restless child under my hands.

"'Be still!' I said to his wife, who caught at my arm to tear it away from her husband's breast. 'Be still—and answer me—I am Anselo Lee.'

"She loosened her hold on my arm when she heard the name, and my cousin lay still on his pillow.

"'Why does my cousin come in the blackest hour of the night to the tent of his brother?' he asked, while I heard the woman whisper to him to answer me—that I was dinnelo and would kill him!

"'I have come, my cousin,' I said to him, putting my face down close to his face; 'I have come in the blackest hour of the night because you lied to me in the open light of the day! I have come for no lies, my brother! I have come for the truth! You shall speak it!'

"'I will not,' he made answer. 'You are dinnelo—I will not tell you where you can find her—let me go!'

"But I would not, and we struggled again in the darkness until I overcame him, forcing him back on his pillow, where he lay panting.

"'He will kill you!' his wife whispered to him. 'Answer his question! If I rouse the camp he will kill us all—is he not mad?'

"'I will kill you indeed, my cousin, if you who have lied to me do not tell me the truth! Speak no more lies, for I shall know by your voice whether you speak falsely or no. Speak now! I will wait no longer!'

"I felt him trembling beneath my hand, for he thought me mad, that I would kill him if he did not speak—as indeed I would have done—when I thought of my darling dying without me!

"'I will not!' he cried again, being a man of great courage.

"But I put one hand at his throat, and one hand I put over

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his heart, and with the one over his heart I pressed downward until he suddenly gasped.

"'I will tell you——'

"Then he told me the truth.

"I did not wait for water to drink, for food to eat, nor for the light of the day to brighten the droms. I went out from the tan into the night, while all the world seemed open and wide and free, for at last I was going to her!"

He paused, stretching out his arms.

"Oh, brother, a great rapture filled me, a great rapture such as comes to one who is dying of thirst, when he plunges his face deep into the icy waters of the spring he has found in the heart of the frozen desert. I was mad, brother—I ran on and on over the rough road, on and on till my breath would not come and I fell on the frosty turf by the drom's side.

"I lay there panting, as the dogs lie in the shade and pant when the camp is made after thirty miles up hill and down; lay there looking at the clear stars overhead until a great calm came in the place of the wild joy, until the pain from the running died out of my heart; then I rose and went on steadily until the morning came, every hour happier, for every hour I was nearer to her.

"In two days I reached the gav where she lived. It was evening when I came to the house of her people, evening with the white snow falling softly over the gray walls of the building, over the frozen lake at the foot of the garden. Lights shone in many windows, lamps burned on either side of the door. It was such a great house that I feared to go up to it, thinking after all that she could not love me—that I had made it all out of my fancy, or that I had dreamt it.

"I stood for a long time at the gateway looking in while the falling snow lodged on my coat; the first snow of the season. As I stood so, wondering what I should do, feeling almost as far from her as I had felt before I set out on my journey—as I stood so, a figure came into the long window that opened down to the ground, and all the light fell on her yellow hair. It was my kamli.

"Her hands touched the glass of the window, her cheek

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was pressed close against it. I knew she was looking out into the night, waiting, watching, thinking of me! All the doubt left my heart, nothing was in my soul but a great passion of rapture and love. . . . In a moment I stood by the window all trembling, as my hand trembles now at the telling. . . . I spoke her name, I held out my arms to her as I stood where the light fell upon me.

"She heard my voice, she saw me—she threw wide the window, she came to my arms as a young wounded bird flies to the nest and falls by its mother. She put her arms close about my neck, then lay still on my breast with her eyes closed, saying no word but my name over and over again, while she pressed her lips to my rough coat, not willing to look in my face nor to kiss me. I don't know how long we stood there with the white of her dress trailing over the white of the snow, but I know that never, never, never were moments so sweet as those moments—never, never were kisses so sweet as those kisses she pressed on my coat!

"We did not speak, we did not move, until the wind shook her yellow hair loose on my shoulder. Then I gathered her into my arms and bore her within the house.

"'Anselo! Anselo!' she whispered, laying her wan cheek close to my dark one. 'Oh, my love, I was waiting for you—I would not die until you came! I was looking for you from the window—all day I have waited for you; I could not see far through the snow, but I knew—I knew you were coming! I knew you would not let me die without saying you pardoned me . . . say that you do . . . say it now—again and again! I dare not look into your face until you have said it! Say it again and again and again!'

"And not until I had told her a hundred times that I pardoned and loved her would she raise her eyes to mine or answer my kisses with kisses. She was so changed, brother—only the gold of her hair, only the deep blue of her eyes were the same. Her voice was but a sweet whisper now, yet I loved her more dearly than ever, and there was only joy in my soul as I held her close in my arms.

"When her people came, as they soon did, hearing her

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voice, they wondered to see me, but let me stay, knowing it was her wish; and were kind to me in their cold way because of the love she bore me.

"The next morning my kamli could not rise from her bed, so I went to sit by her, playing on her guitar all the old songs I had taught her, while she lay with her white face close to the edge of the pillow, her eyes watching me. Sometimes she would sing with me, but so softly that the sound of the strings almost hid the sound of her voice.

"Oh, those were sweet days, brother, sweet to me who was free now to love her, sweet, too, to her, who was free now to be loved! We spoke but once of the past and our parting, but once of the future. The past had held sorrow, the future was all despair! We lived in the moments and hours that we had—we made years of our days, filling them full of our love, full of the glory of living!

"'Anselo,' she whispered one day, drawing me closer to her, her frail hand resting on mine. 'Anselo, we have lived in the golden days—I have lived in the castles I built in my childhood; there is not time now to linger, but the best thing life can give has been mine, and I am content. I have dwelt in the golden days I had dreamt of . . . with you.' She raised her hands to cover my eyes, for tears had come into them at her words. 'When the golden days pass, and I have gone alone into a far country, and you have turned back into the ways of this old world, you will remember how sweet the time was together. Lean nearer—lay your face close to mine—closer—closer . . . I love you, Anselo——'

"She was still for a moment, then she whispered, trembling a little:

"'I think I am dying—call to them—I should be frightened if your hands did not hold mine so closely! Yet I must go alone——'

"The others came and wept over her, and wondered at me as I sat as I always did, holding her hands and smiling into her eyes to give her strength for the journey. When she had kissed them all, with some whispered word of affection, she turned wearily to me, a faint smile lighting her tired face.

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"'I have come to the end of the sweet golden days——'

"Smiling, her head drooped back on the pillow, her yellow hair rich with the last light of the sun that sank into the west as she died."

For a long while he stood looking out from the window at the pale moonlight that fell through the bare boughs of the maples, dimming the lights of the neighboring windows, sparkling on the frost-laden lawns.

"That is all, brother," he said, turning to me, looking again into the fire. "I knew no more of what happened, only that they gave me a little picture of her, set with pearls, that hung on a chain; and were kind to me in the midst of their own grief." His voice broke. "Oh, brother, I have tried to turn back into the ways of the world as she said I must turn—but I cannot! I am as one stricken down in the midst of the day, as one without hope—the joy of life has gone out, as she has gone out of the world! I shall never see her again—she has gone to too high a heaven——"

As he spoke he turned slowly from me.

"Aye, pal, mandy knows what you would pen, but there is no comfort in it. Only the great God could give me my kamli, and He never gives back the dead. . . . Only He could show me her face by the hedges, wherever I look, but He will not, for my people blasphemed Him over a thousand years ago and He will not forgive them—we are to wander and never to rest! I will take up my penance, and maybe for her sake who loved me so well the great God will show me her face over the hedges as I jal on the droms. Maybe for her sake He will open the gates of the high heaven when my penance is done that I may go through them to her——"

I held out my hands to detain him. He took them, pressed them, and, smiling sadly, was gone from the room and the house.

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OUT FROM LYNN

LEWIS WORTHINGTON SMITH

WHEN I came down the road to Lynn
The surf was beating loud.
Across the sea a ship came in,
Each sail a clinging shroud.
I stood upon the windy hill,
The vagrant heart within me still.
The world was larger to my view,
That moment, than my boyhood knew.

When I put out to sea from Lynn
The tide was dropping down.
I saw the evening lights begin
To glint out in the town.
Straining my eyes across the night,
I watched them till they vanished quite.
My father's house, the day before,
Had seemed as distant as the shore.

When I was out of sight of Lynn
I caught the seaman's tread.
I had a hole to stow me in
And hard boards for my bed.
Like one enchanted, through my work
I watched the stars out in the murk,
Above and in our wake of foam,
The changeless stars I knew at home.

When I go back some day to Lynn,
I know the street that leads
To country lanes I loitered in
Before my manhood's needs.
I shall not mind the buffets then,
The earnest give and take of men,
If some one stands within the door,—
If some one stands—I ask no more.

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THE POETRY OF RUDYARD KIPLING

J. DE LANCEY FERGUSON

IT has been the misfortune of Rudyard Kipling to have gained the reputation of being a sort of political oracle, and as a result of this everything that he writes is scanned and dissected by zealous critics who hope to discover therein some veiled parable, even when none is visible on the surface. In the case of his poetry the result of this attitude has been to centre attention upon the avowedly political verse, much of which is mediocre and some of which is unspeakably bad, and either to treat inadequately or to ignore entirely the work that does not "talk of empire." This has been true especially of his later work, and the consequence is that much that from a literary point of view must rank as his very best has never received adequate notice. This lack it is the purpose of the present article in some small degree to supply.

In speaking of Kipling's poetry I mean to use the word in its best sense, as distinguished from verse and doggerel, under which heads must be placed most of the *Departmental Ditties* and the greater part of the political poems, especially the more recent ones. The *Barrack-Room Ballads* may also be disregarded in the present discussion, since the real value of most of them probably cannot be determined in this generation, there being no reliable criterion whereby they may be judged. Their popular appeal has been strong, but the time-test is fatal to so much that is popular in its youth that we may well view with apprehension its application to most of the *Ballads*.

But even when these are disregarded there remains a large body of verse, much of which has been neglected by the general reader as well as by the critics. Mention Kipling's poetry to the average man (or woman) and if he (or she) does not begin to quote *Mandalay* it will be because he (or she) is quoting *Gunga Din* or *Danny Deever*. And one seeks in vain through the files of the reviews for intelligent or discriminating criticism of the "uncrowned Laureate's" best work. Printed comment on Kipling's poetry may be roughly divided into two periods—

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the rhapsodical and the censorious. The first period, in which everything he wrote was accorded extravagant praise, covers the years between his first appearance before the English and American public and the publication of *The Seven Seas*. On the verse that appeared prior to *The Seven Seas* the reviewers heaped the wildest admiration, and much of what they said was quite untrue. A writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (August, 1892) actually spoke of Kipling as "a young man who can write blank verse in a style of his own"! Now as a matter of fact the little blank verse that Kipling was guilty of is wretched stuff, and is written, as anyone ought to be able to see, not in a style of his own, but in a style of Robert Browning's.

With the appearance of *The Seven Seas* opinion divided. Some praised it highly, but others were convinced that the work showed a distinct falling off. *The Bookman* (New York) was one of the leaders in the reaction, which spread rapidly. When *The Five Nations* was published, there was scarce one so poor to do it reverence. The only commendation is to be found in a few English reviews, and they, with characteristic discrimination, pick out the poorest work for honorable mention—*The Files*, for example, or *Et Dona Ferentes*. As for the verses that have appeared since 1902, the denunciation has been unsparing. And yet the same publications that condemn the work when it first appears will, after a year or two, point to it as the example of a high standard from which some still more recent work has fallen away. An adequate explanation of this phenomenon seems to be lacking. The most plausible one is that for the real appreciation of his best work careful reading and re-reading is necessary, the hurried skimming given it by the professional reviewer failing to note the finer shades and qualities that give distinction to the writing.

Having thus noted the shortcomings of reviewers and of the public, let us turn to the really fine poetry whose very existence is so often ignored. This poetry, it must be remembered, is not confined to the three or four volumes of verse which Kipling has published, many of the finest poems being scattered through other books, such as the *Jungle Books* and the *Puck* stories. Still others have never been collected in any form.

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For convenience in discussion, Kipling's best work may be divided into three general classes—patriotic and didactic verse, narrative or dramatic poems, and poems of nature or of out-door life. Of course this classification, like most of its kind, is a mere makeshift. The groups frequently overlap, and one small but important class can hardly be placed under any of the three divisions—the class, namely, of dedicatory poems. These are few in number, but they comprise two or three of his very finest poems, as well as some of the worst. They will therefore be considered separately.

The first class, of patriotic and didactic verse, shades off into the realm of political doggerel in such awful warnings (to the maker of verses) as *The Lesson, Et Dona Ferentes,* or, most horrible of all, *The Absent-minded Beggar.* But it includes also such fine pieces as *The Sons of Martha, If—, The Galley-Slave, A Song of the English, The English Flag, The Song of Diego Valdez,* and, most famous of all, *The White Man's Burden.* In spite of their stirring metre and splendid imagery there is nevertheless, to the non-British mind at least, a strong flavor of jingoism about such poems as *The Galley-Slave* and *The English Flag,* and also, though to a lesser degree, about the *Song of the English.* It is this "blessed are the English, for they have inherited the earth" tone that causes Kipling frequently to grate on American nerves. But inasmuch as none but a nation that is without sin in the matter of jingoism and self-glorification is entitled to cast stones, it may be well to pass lightly over the verse that is purely British in its appeal and consider rather those poems which have a more universal application.

Attempts to state an author's "message" usually prove nothing except the folly of the self-appointed interpreter, but the undaunted criticaster is always ready to rush in where angels fear to tread and will bring back in time for lunch the "message" of anyone you may name, from Dante to O. Henry. Nevertheless, after much reading of Kipling's work in prose and verse, one thought seems so to dominate all others that it may be worth while to state it. This is the thought of loyalty and service, perhaps best expressed in McAndrew's words:

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"Law, Order, Duty and Restraint, Obedience, Discipline." On this commandment hang all the law and the prophets of the great mass of Kipling's stories and poems. Not a difficult gospel, indeed almost too obvious and commonplace to satisfy some aspiring souls, but certainly a gospel that this age would do well to heed. We hear so much about the right of the individual to the full development of his personality, the worker is so ready to place his own real or imagined grievances above every consideration of the common good, that it is good to hear one who reminds us that even the greatest genius can accomplish nothing if he has to contend with the "leagued unfaithfulness" of his subordinates, and that

> "From forge and farm and mine and bench,
> Deck, altar, outpost lone,
> Mill, school, battalion, counter, trench,
> Rail, senate, sheepfold, throne,
> Creation's cry goes up on high
> From age to cheated age:
> 'Send us the men who do the work
> For which they draw the wage.'"

None realizes better than Kipling how completely the whole fabric of society depends on the unswerving fidelity of the worker, and none has expressed this dependence as forcibly and concisely as he has in *The Sons of Martha*. Here is poetry that does what the great mass of recent poetry does not do, namely, touch the ordinary life of a working-day world. There is scarcely a word in the eight stanzas of the poem but is used as a railroader or a civil engineer would use it a dozen times a day in the course of ordinary talk, and yet who dare say that it is not fine poetry? If poets are to regain their old-time influence over the minds of men, they must cease sporting with the tangles of Neæra's hair and get back to the real life of mankind as Kipling does in this and other poems. Could anything be simpler than the language of these stanzas, yet could anything be more vivid?

> "It is their care through all the ages to take the buffet and cushion the shock,
> It is their care that the gear engages, it is their care that the switches lock,

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It is their care that the wheels run truly, it is their care to embark and entrain,
Tally, transport, and deliver duly the Sons of Mary by land and main.

* * *

"They do not preach that their God will rouse them a little before the nuts work loose;
They do not teach that His pity allows them to leave their work whenever they choose;
As in the thronged and lightened ways, so in the dark and the desert they stand,
Wary and watchful all their days that their brethren's days may be long in the land."

Sons of Martha, like many another phrase of Kipling's, is already one of the stock references of writers and speakers. Stories have been written with it as a text, and pictures have been named from it. It may safely be asserted that no contemporary writer has contributed so many words and phrases to the vocabulary of everyday life, a fact that in itself proves how close is their author's connection with reality. And it is this power of coining striking phrases that makes even his doggerel of so long life, for his best known expressions are by no means always in his best poems.

Though he sings so triumphantly of empire, none realizes better than he does its cost. *The White Man's Burden,* which now applies to Americans just as vitally as to Englishmen, is the most famous example of his recognition of the price of dominion, but *The Sea-Wife* and other poems, notably the second part of *The Song of the Dead,* express the same feeling. Blood is the price of admiralty. " 'Tis on the bones of the English the English flag is stayed."

What rank should be given to such poems as *If—* and *The Thousandth Man* it is not easy to say. The former especially is one of those poems which must be reckoned with because of its power of stirring and impressing people on whom higher poetry has little or no effect. Here again the doctrine of loyalty is emphasized, in this case loyalty to one's own better self. *The Thousandth Man* extols the unshakable loyalty of a friend who will stick more close than a brother. Whatever may

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be their value as pure poetry, these poems are inspiring, and at least they are better poetry than Mrs. Wilcox's "man worth while is the man who can smile when everything goes dead wrong."

But greater than any of the political or didactic verse are the narrative poems, that range from the crude but powerful *Ballad of Fisher's Boarding House* in his early volume of verses to the charming simplicity of *Eddi's Service* in *Rewards and Fairies,* and include such remarkable achievements as *McAndrew's Hymn* and *The Three Sealers.*

The most important as well as the most famous of the first volume of *Ballads* is the *Ballad of East and West,* that drew high praise from the aged Tennyson. A splendid piece of narrative it undoubtedly is, and a remarkable performance for so young a man, but when looked at from the standpoint of technique and metrical skill far inferior to his later poems. There is a hammer-like beat to the verse, an undue protrusion of the metrical skeleton of the fourteen syllable lines, in *East and West,* that has been overcome in *The Three Sealers* and *McAndrew's Hymn.* Compare the unescapable vehemence of the internal rhyme in the first of the following lines (from *East and West*) with the skilful masking of it in the second (from *The Three Sealers*):

"The colonel's son to the fort has won, they bid him stay and eat. . . ."
". . . And they felt the sheerstrakes pound and clear, but never a word was said."

The Rhyme of the Three Sealers (to give it its full title) is in every way superior to *East and West.* With the perversity that characterizes all its dealings with Kipling the public has seized upon and made famous the most tawdry line in the poem, namely, "There's never a law of God or man runs north of Fifty-three." Lafcadio Hearn saw its real merits, however, and in his letters we find repeated praises of it. And Hearn was no mean judge of poetic art and beauty.

The most casual reading of the poem will show that Hearn's enthusiasm was fully justified. All the loneliness of northern seas seems compressed into the one line—

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"Where the gray sea goes nakedly between the weed-hung shelves."

In the description of the scene when the fog lifted after the fight, every phrase adds a fresh splash of color to the picture, until we see the whole as vividly, probably more vividly than if we were present:

". . . The good fog heard, like a splitten sail to left and right she tore,
And they saw the sun-dogs in the haze and the seal upon the shore.
Silver and gray ran spit and bay to meet the steel-backed tide,
And pinched and white in the clearing light the crews stared overside.
O rainbow-gay the red pools lay that spilled and swilled and spread,
And gold, raw gold, the spent shell rolled between the careless dead,—
The dead that rocked so drunkenwise to weather and to lee,
And they saw the work their hands had done as God had bade them see!"

This lament of the dying Reuben Paine is noteworthy for its Kiplingesque fidelity to detail in the pictures of the New England coast which he paints in the words of the dying poacher, but it is far surpassed by the last speech of Tom Hall. In one line of it, the second of the two I quote, Lafcadio Hearn said there was more poetry and real feeling than in the whole of *Madame Chrysanthème:*

"And west you'll turn and south again, beyond the sea-fog's rim,
And tell the Yoshiwara girls to burn a stick for him."

Higher even than *The Three Sealers* are the two dramatic monologues, *McAndrew's Hymn* and *The Mary Gloster.* They represent the high-water mark of Kipling's achievements in the portrayal of character in verse. Lafcadio Hearn called them "marvellous things," and the epithet is deserved. They exhibit in its greatest development that grasp of essential details, the golden mean between superficiality and tediousness, and that astonishing command of technical terms so characteristic of their author.

The portrait of "the dour Scots engineer" is a creation that Sir Walter might be proud of, but Sir Walter would have taken some hundreds of pages to depict all the phases of a character that Kipling develops in a few hundred lines. McAndrew's anxiety about the salvation of his soul, his penitence for the sins of his youth, his superficial severity and

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sternness and underlying tenderness, his lost love—who died "the year the *Sarah Sands* was burned"—his affectionate devotion to his engines and his almost fanatical adherence to what he considers his duty—all this is painted with a master-hand. It was no small feat to portray a man with the making of a Covenanter martyr in him, a man who burned the plans of his invention lest it interfere with his duty to his engines, and who yet could turn from devotional meditation to the vehement reproval of an oiler, his remarks to the latter closing with the heartfelt exclamation, "'Tis deeficult to sweer nor take the Name in vain!" His reason for refusing to consider foreign service is delicious:

". . . I'd sooner starve than sail
Wi' such as call a snifter-rod *ross* . . . French for nightingale."

What a snifter-rod is I have not the least idea, but my lack of knowledge in no wise interferes with my appreciation of the humor of the passage. Here, as in the description of the "orchestra sublime" of the engines, the technicalities are no more than the carven grotesques that cover the façade of a Gothic church. Ignorance of their real meaning does not, or should not, impair our pleasure in the structure as a well-built whole. The centre of interest in the poem is the character of McAndrew, and even if he miscalled technicalities more egregiously than Sir Kenneth of the Board he would still be essentially true. The spirit is something apart from the raiment in which it is concealed.

If the character of McAndrew is one that might have been created by Scott, that of Sir Anthony Gloster is a conception not unworthy of Robert Browning. At first glance it would seem difficult to find two poems further apart in spirit and subject than *The Mary Gloster* and *The Bishop Orders His Tomb,* yet the two are in certain respects parallel. As Browning's poem sums up the good and the bad of Renaissance paganism, even so *The Mary Gloster* sums up the commercialism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—the coarseness and brutality of the "self-made" millionaire, his glorification of "specious gifts material," but also his delight in honestly done work and the unexpected vein of idealism that underlies the whole.

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Like *McAndrew's Hymn, The Mary Gloster* is a marvel of condensation. We know Sir Anthony as thoroughly at the end of about three hundred lines as we know that much more lovable self-made man, Christopher Vance, at the end of as many pages. Kipling's hero certainly is not lovable, but there is more than a little dignity and pathos in the death of this man who had "made himself and a million," but whose only wish as the darkness closes in is that he may lie in Macassar Strait by the side of the dead wife of his youth, the wife to whom he has always been faithful in spirit though false in deed. The strange contradictions in the character of the man who would not tolerate dishonest work ("cutting the frames too light") and who yet would steal his dead partner's plans, who gave his son all the money he could spend and then despised him because that system of training turned him into a worthless cad, all this forms a picture which is typical of the careers of "merchant princes" in America as well as in England. Beauty there is not in the picture, but strength and that dignity that results from strength there are.

But though beauty is lacking in the poem as a whole, there are a few striking lines scattered through it. The description, for example, of how he would go out to his last berth "by the little Paternosters"—

"Lashed in our old deck-cabin, with all three port-holes wide,
The kick of the screw beneath him, and the round blue seas outside. . . ."

is certainly vivid, and moreover is expressed in words which a man like Gloster might actually use.

The finest descriptive passage in the poem is, however, the closing one, wherein the death of the man is told in the figure of the sinking ship:

"Down by the head an' sinkin'. Her fires are drawn and cold,
And the water's splashin' hollow on the skin of the empty hold—
Churning and choking and chuckling, quiet and scummy and dark—
Full to her lower hatches and risin' steady. Hark!
That was the after-bulkhead. . . . She's flooded from stem to stern. . . .
Never seen death yet, Dickie? Well, now is your time to learn!"

After the publication of *The Seven Seas,* Kipling wrote no more narrative or dramatic verse of the type of *The Three*

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Sealers and *The Mary Gloster*. The only poems in narrative form in *The Five Nations* are political parables. Recently, however, he has developed a new kind of narrative poem founded on the old ballads. Probably Hudson Maxim would deny that these are poems, since tropes are almost non-existent in their lines. In *Eddi's Service,* the best poem of them all, there is not a single trope, scarcely even a simile. Among all the poets of the last fifty years it would be difficult to find any poem so utterly naked of adornment and withal so charming. It is too long to quote entire, and would be completely ruined by cutting, so those who are interested must look it up in *Rewards and Fairies*. *The Ballad of Minepit Shaw* in the same volume is also a good example of Kipling's later narrative style, but it is more obviously an imitation of the old ballads.

The third great division of Kipling's poetry is that of verse dealing with nature and outdoor life. Some of this, that sings of the "go-fever," is probably the most popular of his poetry except the barrack-room ballads, and it deserves its popularity, for there was nothing like it in the language before Kipling's time, and any that has appeared since he showed how to do it is so manifestly copied from him that it may be disregarded. So far as the love of out-of-doors was made a subject of poetry by Kipling's predecessors, it was seldom more than a reputed desire to follow the baying hounds, to sport with Amaryllis in the shade, or, if the bard were unusually daring, to sail the bounding main. None of them ever mentioned what he would do if it were cold or wet, or if the sea were really rough. Kipling changed all this. He has sung of the seaman's love of his sea as she serves him or kills, of the pleasure in the bucking, beam-sea roll of a black Bilbao tramp with her loadline over her hatch and a drunken Dago crew, of the misty sweat-bath of the tropic jungle, of the long day's patience belly down on frozen drift when hunting *ovis poli*—in short, of all the fierce, elemental joys to which the Young Men turn when the Red Gods call. In *The Song of the Banjo, The Feet of the Young Men, The Long Trail* (*L'Envoi* to *Ballads* and *Barrack-Room Ballads*), *The Lost Legion,* and *The Sea and the Hills* he has summed up outdoor life in all its phases, and incidentally has furnished

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dozens of newspaper and magazine poets with their entire stock in trade.

No poet, not even Swinburne, has sung of the sea, and of man's strife with the sea, more splendidly that has Kipling. Swinburne has praised the sea as his " fair green-girdled mother, . . . Mother and lover of men," but Swinburne has little or nothing to say of the fierce and ceaseless struggle which man and his creatures of wood and steel and stone wage with the sea. Even in Swinburne's wonderful tale of the rout of the *Armada* one is given the impression that the sea harms only England's foes and not her sons. Kipling knows better, and is not afraid to say what he knows, that—

> " We have fed our sea for a thousand years
> And she calls us, still unfed,
> Though there's never a wave of all her waves
> But marks our English dead. . . . "

But he knows, too, the irresistible call of the White Horses of the sea, and the joy that the men of the sea feel in their strife with their mighty adversary. Sea-pictures abound in all his poems, and when he wishes to tell how keenly hill-men desire their hills, he can find no way of expressing their longing save in terms of the sea.

In his sea-pictures, as in all his descriptions, Kipling's method is suggestive and not detailed. He gives, it may be, no more than a single word or phrase, but he makes that one expression so striking and vivid that the reader's mind at once supplies the details and realizes the scene better than it could have done after a page of uninspired detail. When we read such passages as the following we see far more than the actual words tell us:

> " There danced the deep to windward,
> Blue-empty 'neath the sun."

> " . . . The wreck that lies on the spouting reef
> Where the ghastly blue-lights flare. . . . "

> " . . . Here leaps ashore the full Sou'west
> All heavy-winged with brine."

The picture of the *Coastwise Lights* is a splendid piece of imagery, but the last stanzas of the poem show a distinct falling-

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off. I quote the first stanza, one phrase from which—"the swinging, smoking seas"—is used in Alfred Noyes' *Drake* in the rather colorless description of the flight of the Armada, where it shines like a diamond among pebbles.

"Our brows are wreathed with spindrift, and the weed is on our knees;
Our loins are battered 'neath us by the swinging, smoking seas.
From reef and rock and skerry, over headland, ness, and voe,
The Coastwise Lights of England watch the ships of England go."

One might continue indefinitely to quote from these verses, but a line must be drawn somewhere. Before leaving the "wanderlust" poems, however, one thing further should be noted, and that is the fact that the steamship owes its entrance into poetry largely, if not entirely, to Rudyard Kipling. It is the "world-end steamers" that he turns to when he yearns beyond the sky-line, and he follows the railway also till "the rails run out in sand-drift." Of the Romance of Things as They Are he is the first and greatest singer.

There is, however, another side to Kipling's nature. If he understands the "go-fever" he also understands homesickness, and has given wonderful expression to it. *Christmas in India,* as a revelation of the intensity of an exile's longing for home, is second only to Swinburne's *Jacobite's Exile.* Kipling was scarcely more than a boy when he wrote this, and he felt the loneliness and desolation of those who "wait in heavy harness on fluttered folk and wild" with a keenness that an older man would have been incapable of. It is related that the editor who had asked Kipling for a Christmas poem would not publish it until a parody called *Christmas in London* was written and printed in the next column to take the sting out of Kipling's work. It would be hard to find a stronger testimonial to the poem's truth to life. The exile dares not think too long or too intently of home.

Another poem, little known, forms a striking companion-piece to *Christmas in India.* This is the exquisite *Song of the Wise Children,* which the reviewers of *The Five Nations* unanimously ignored. As *Christmas in India* depicts the yearning of the exile for his English home, so *The Song of the Wise Children* gives us the Anglo-Indian's recollections of the happy days

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he spent in the land of his birth as he looks back on them after time has blotted out the memory of discomfort and homesickness. There are few passages anywhere in Kipling's work that can surpass, as pure poetry, these two stanzas:

"We shall go back by boltless doors
To the life unaltered our childhood knew,
To the naked feet on the cool dark floors,
And the high-ceiled rooms that the Trade blows through;

"To the trumpet-flowers and the moon beyond,
And the tree-toads' chorus drowning all,
And the lisp of the split banana-frond
That talked us to sleep when we were small."

There is magic in such verse as that, and the man who can write it deserves to be called one of our great poets. But he can do more than express the exile's desire for his home-land; he can put into words a man's love for the land in which he dwells, no matter where that land may be. *The Native-born* is an early and rather crude example of this power of his, but in *The Flowers* we have the same thing in a much more restrained and artistic form. It shows the extraordinary cosmopolitanism of the man that he can interpret the home-love of the Canadian, the South African, the Australian, or the New Zealander with as much force as he can that of the Old Englander. And his having found a home that he loves in Sussex has not destroyed his power to appreciate the attractions of the homes of others. In 1908 he contributed to *Collier's Weekly* several articles descriptive of a journey through the Canadian North-west. The poem which I quote is in praise of the plains of Manitoba, and is included in his latest book under the name of *The Prairie.* It stands to confute those who say that Kipling has forgotten how to write poetry.

"'I see the grass shake in the sun for leagues on either hand,
I see a river loop and run about a treeless land—
An empty plain, a steely pond, a distance diamond-clear,
And low blue naked hills beyond. And what is that to fear?'

"Go softly by that river-side or, when you would depart,
You'll find its every winding tied and knotted round your heart.
Be wary as the seasons pass, or you may ne'er outrun
The wind that sets that yellowed grass a-shiver 'neath the sun.

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"'I hear the summer storm outblown—the drip of the grateful wheat.
I hear the hard trail telephone a far-off horse's feet.
I hear the horns of autumn blow to the wild-fowl overhead;
And I hear the hush before the snow. And what is that to dread?'

"Take heed what spell the lightning weaves—what charm the echoes shape—
Or, bound among a million sheaves, your soul may not escape.
Bar home the door of summer nights lest those high planets drown
The memory of near delights in all the longed-for town.

"'What need have I to long or fear? Now, friendly, I behold
My faithful seasons robe the year in silver and in gold.
Now I possess and am possessed of the land where I would be,
And the curve of half Earth's generous breast shall soothe and ravish me!'"

The most beautiful of all these descriptive poems is *Sussex*. It, like the stories and poems of the *Puck* books, reflects the author's genuine love of the goodly land in which he has made his home.

"God gave all men all earth to love,
But, since our hearts are small,
Ordained for each one spot should prove
Beloved over all. . . ."

Even if he had not written *Sussex*, the *Puck* stories would be enough to tell us that the pleasant South-coast county is the land that to Kipling has become beloved over all. He knows the secret heart of Sussex as Hardy knows that of Wessex, and I confidently expect that his best work in the future will draw its inspiration from the life, past and present, of "Sussex by the sea."

Great as is the temptation to quote at length from this poem I shall give only one further example, which I choose because the thought expressed occurs several times in Kipling's later work. After speaking of the traces of Roman occupation he says:

"What sign of those that fought and died
At shift of sword and sword?
The barrow and the camp abide,
The sunshine and the sward."

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There is a passage exactly similar in that beautiful little ballad in the *Just-So Stories*—the one that begins "There runs a road by Merrow Down":

> "Of all the tribe of Tegumai
> That cut that figure none remain;
> On Merrow Down the cuckoos cry,
> The silence and the sun remain."

And the same thought is developed at a little more length in the last stanza of *Philadelphia* in *Rewards and Fairies*. The pictures of nature in his earlier work are marvellously vivid, but there is nothing in any of them that shows any such realization of man's unity with nature as we find in such passages as those I have quoted. Whatever course his future work may take, we at least know that he stands with his feet on solid earth.

II

The last division of Kipling's poetry whereof I intend to treat is the small group of dedicatory poems. Although the group includes two or three recent pieces that are rather uninspired, besides the injudicious extravagances of the memorial verses to Wolcott Balestier, the general standard is very high. The dedication of *The Seven Seas* "To the City of Bombay" is a graceful and beautiful poem, a number of whose lines have become familiar quotations. Another deservedly popular dedication is the one which introduces the Indian verses ("I have eaten your bread and your salt," etc.). But the finest of them all is "To the True Romance," which originally opened *Many Inventions* and which was later reprinted, with a few verbal changes, in *The Seven Seas*. If this is not Kipling's best lyric it is at least one of the best, and there are few poems dealing with abstract subjects that can surpass it. It achieves the double triumph of making an abstract topic intensely real and of using with consummate skill a metre that in most hands becomes as a sounding brass or as the pounding of a sledge-hammer.

The theme of the poem is that without the guidance of the "True Romance"—*i.e.*, without the possession of an ideal—no

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great deed can be done, but that with her leadership all things are possible.

"Since spoken word Man's Spirit stirred
Beyond his belly-need,
What is is Thine of fair design
In thought and craft and deed.
Each stroke aright of toil and fight
That was and that shall be,
And hope too high, wherefor we die,
Has birth and worth in Thee.

* *

"Pure Wisdom hath no certain path
That lacks thy morning-eyne,
And captains bold by Thee controlled
Most like to gods design.
Thou art the Voice to kingly boys
To lift them through the fight,
And Comfortress of Unsuccess
To give the dead good-night."

In closing it may not be inappropriate to quote from the splendidly self-confident *Envoi* to *Life's Handicap,* written in the pride of his youth and success, while the evil days came not.

"My new-cut ashlar takes the light
Where crimson-blank the windows flare.
By my own work, before the night,
Great Overseer, I make my prayer.

"If there be good in that I wrought
Thy hand compelled it, Master, Thine;
Where I have failed to meet Thy thought
I know, through Thee, the fault is mine.

* *

"One stone the more swings to its place
In that dread Temple of Thy Worth—
It is enough that by Thy grace
I saw naught common on Thy earth.

"Take not that vision from my ken;
O whatsoe'er may spoil or speed,
Help me to need no aid from men,
That I may help such men as need!"

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EDITORIAL NOTES

Mexico

THE Mexican situation steadily grows more serious and President Wilson is confronted with a difficult task. But the President has already proved that he is the strongest and ablest Chief Executive that Washington has seen for many a long year, and he may be trusted to find the best, if not the easiest, way to deal with a problem that has too long been left unsolved.

It is astonishing that there should have been any debate with regard to the recognition of the Huerta régime. The United States cannot recognize any Government founded upon murder, dependent upon force, unstable, and unenlightened. The contention that the Mexicans have chosen what they preferred, or, at least, received what they deserved, has no validity. We are not entitled to recognize any Government that does not conform to certain reasonable standards. Though Mexico has a right to mismanage her own affairs, she cannot expect the approval of other countries; and when the policy of muddle gravely involves the interests of those countries, even mere toleration becomes impossible.

Firmness in dealing with the situation is necessary, and will be shown. But the President will realize that powerful interests have been at work to force armed intervention. Intervention may come: but it must not come as the result of an organized press campaign of partial misrepresentation of conditions.

Governor Sulzer

So far, Governor Sulzer has made no reply worth considering to the charges brought against him. It is possible that, after we have gone to press, he may try to vindicate himself. It is possible also that he may adopt the method of the "retort discourteous" and draw attention to a few of the innumerable skeletons in the Tammany closet.

But it seems quite clear that Governor Sulzer's public career

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is ended. Tammany, for once in its existence, has performed a public service. To the amazement and amusement of the world, an organization inseparably identified with corruption has fought a little fight to establish the principle of purity in politics.

But Tammany has over-reached itself. Brazenly, it fought its little fight from utterly selfish motives. It attacked corruption on a small scale in order that corruption on a colossal scale might flourish. Governor Sulzer had dared to defy the coterie which created him as a political personage. He has been promptly disciplined.

But Tammany has forgotten that in exposing Governor Sulzer, it was exposing the very best of its own products. It could scarcely be expected that the Governor could escape altogether from the corrosive taint to which a "Tammany man" is invariably subjected. The public which deliberately enslaves itself by voting the Tammany ticket surely did not expect any Tammany protégé to be free from Tammany influences and from the peculiar characteristics of Tammany training!

If the Governor had not quarrelled with Charles F. Murphy, autocrat of New York State, would the public have been made acquainted with Mr. Sulzer's peccadilloes? Has Mr. Murphy so strong a regard for public decency that he would expose even his dearest friend for the sake of the public welfare? If so, *let him expose himself*. The New York Legislature is entirely at his disposal. Let him direct it to conduct a stringent inquiry into the conduct of the organization known as Tammany Hall. Governor Sulzer's Wall Street experiences would fade into very thin air when contrasted with the disclosures that are merely waiting for the investigation of the first Legislature that will fearlessly carry out its duty to the people.

"*Legalized Insult*"

A NEW YORK newspaper recently published an editorial with the heading *Legalized Insult*. As an example of asininity it is almost unparalleled, even in the annals of the New York press.

"Persons desiring to procure marriage licenses in Phila-

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delphia are now held up for an indefinite time while, under the new eugenic marriage law which went into effect August 1, a clerk asks them impertinent questions touching their physical and moral character. For the most part the men either grew indignant or took it as a joke when they were asked whether they had any transmissible disease or whether they were imbeciles, epileptics, drunkards or drug fiends. The women invariably flushed painfully and stammered an answer with an angry protest.

" It is, in addition to other objectionable features, a useless waste of time and will simply drive many out of the State to be wed."

This particular marriage law may be imperfect. The compulsory production of a stringent health certificate would prevent any necessity for " impertinent questions." But the women who " invariably flushed painfully and stammered an answer with an angry protest " showed a childish and pitiful ignorance of true modesty and true morality. Tens of thousands of such women are condemned every year to a hell upon earth because the prudery that is called modesty forbids them to face the fundamental facts of life and to learn the essential truths of sex-relationships. Presumably the modesty that is shocked by a simple question will remain suavely unimpaired when confronted with the spectacle of a syphilitic child or any of the abominations which represent the price of prudery.

Naturally, the men "either grew indignant or took it as a joke when they were asked whether they had any transmissible disease or whether they were imbeciles, epileptics, drunkards or drug fiends." In view of the fact that at least fifty per cent. of men contract venereal disease at some time in their lives, it is obviously excessively impertinent to ask them whether they are fit to marry, or fit only for a penitentiary. No wonder a certain proportion " took it as a joke." Venereal disease, epilepsy, imbecility and alcoholism are so comical that a little laughter is indispensable.

If there is a decent man living who will object, for his own sake, his wife's sake, his children's sake, and the sake of the whole community, to produce a health certificate when applying

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for a marriage license, he should be sent to an elementary school for the training of the mentally defective. And the women who will face all that is involved in marriage and childbirth, while shrinking from the simple knowledge that will safeguard, and not undermine, their innocence and their happiness, should be sent back to the nursery to play with their dolls. They are not fit to have any other kind of baby, or to live in any other environment.

50,000 Reasonable Women

THE pilgrimage of non-militant suffragists to London from all parts of England culminated in a gathering of 50,000 women in Hyde Park. Their leaders were women like Mrs. Millicent Fawcett, Mrs. Philip Snowden, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, and Miss Susan Lawrence. Legitimate and sensible methods were adopted, and a deep and enduring impression was made on the public.

Law and Reason were the watchwords which appeared most frequently on the multitudinous banners displayed, and Mrs. Fawcett, who is president of the National Union of Woman's Suffrage Societies, claimed that the pilgrimage was "a grand object lesson of the power of the non-militant section of the Woman's Suffrage Party."

It was time that such a demonstration should be made, to recall to the people of England what votes for women really means. The courageous but fanatical militants have done too much to associate a fine cause with frenzied methods. It will need all the efforts of Mrs. Fawcett and her colleagues to counteract the harm already done by their excitable sisters. The open proclamation of reasonable methods must be followed by the open condemnation of the violence that can influence only the people who are not worth influencing.

"Tiger"

SOME discussion has occurred with regard to the publication of *Tiger,* by Witter Bynner, in the May number of THE FORUM. It was reported in the daily papers—no communica-

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tion was sent to the editor of THE FORUM—that some purity league had taken exception to the morality of Mr. Bynner's remarkable little drama.

THE FORUM is not read by imperfectly educated and imperfectly developed men and women. It is read by the thinking, earnest people of the nation; by those who believe in the future of their country, but do *not* believe in waiting with folded hands for progress to overcome the inertia of the sluggish, or the crude antagonism of the reactionaries. It is read by those who believe in ideals, but not in ranting; by those who have passed beyond the narrow limits of provincialism in politics, literature, art, and the knowledge of life.

There has been no question as to the place of THE FORUM in American letters and its value to American life. Addressing perhaps the most intelligent public in the world, and throughout the world, it has opened its pages to the free discussion of all vital topics, while maintaining the only attitude that should now be possible: to seek, and to speak, the truth; to attack ignorance and prevent the crimes and the follies that spring from ignorance; and to attack especially that deadly prudery which, in the name of so-called morality, will tolerate daily the most loathsome practices in every village, town and city of the country, but will *not* tolerate—much less encourage—any sincere effort to bring home to the conscience of humanity a clear realization of the corruption of "civilization," and of the necessity for action,—now, and here: not at the time of the Greek Kalends, or in some visionary Utopia.

If anyone could read *Tiger,* and not be profoundly impressed by the whole spirit and motive of the play, culminating in the tense climax which is, in itself, such a scathing indictment of modern hypocrisy, then, indeed, the necessity for *Tiger,* and for all such earnest, fearless attempts to break down the ghastly tradition of "outward decency and inner corruption," becomes even more obvious and peremptory.

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